PHILOMELA,

THE LADY FITZVVATERS NIGHTINGALE.

BY

ROBERT GREENE,

Vtriuſque Academiæ in Artibus *Magiſter*.

Sero ſed ſerio.

LONDON,
Imprinted by *George Purſlowe*. 1615.

TO THE RIGHT Honorable, the Lady BRIDGET RATLIFFE, Lady *Fitzwaters*: *Robert Greene* wiſheth increaſe of *honour and vertue.*

RIght beautiful and bountifull Lady, finding my ſelfe humbly deuoted to the Right honourable the Lord *Fitzwaters* your huſbād, not onely that I am borne his, but alſo for the gracious acceptance of a ſmall Pamphlet, written by an other, & preſented to him by me: I endeuoured any way, and euery way that I might, to diſcouer my affectionate duety to him by ſome ſcholler-like labours, that I beganne to toſſe ouer the firſt fruits of my wits, wrapt vp as ſchollers treaſures be, in looſe papers, that I might ſift out ſome thing worthy his Honor, but finding al worthleſſe of his Lordſhip, at laſt, I lighted vpon this fiction of Venetian *Philomela*, which I had written long ſince, & kept charily, being penned at the requeſt of a Counteſſe in this land, to approue womens chaſtity: as ſoone as I had read it ouer, and reduced it into forme, licking it a little as the Beares doe their whelpes, to bring them to perfection: I

haue reſolued to make good my duety to his Lordſhip, in doing homage with my ſimple labours to your Ladiſhip, knowing, ſeruice done to the wife, is gratified in the huſband: whereupon I preſume to preſent the dedication of chaſt *Philomela* to your Honour, and to chriſten it in your Ladiſhips name, calling it the Lady *Fitzwaters* Nightingale, as if I ſhould inſinuate a compariſon twixt you and him of equall and honourable vertues: Imitating herein Maſter *Abraham France*, who tituled the Lamentations of *Amintas*, vnder the name of the Counteſſe of Pembrookes *Iuie Church*: for herein your Ladyſhip had farre more perfections then yeares, and more inward excellence then externe beauty, yet ſo beautifull, as few ſo fayre, though none more vertuous, I thought the Legend of an honourable and chaſte Lady, would be gratefull to your Honour, whoſe mind is wholy delighted in chaſt thoughts, keeping herein a perfect decorum to appropriate the nature of the gift to the content of the perſon. For ſuch as offer incence to *Venus*, burne myrrhe mixed with Eringion. Thoſe that glory *Pallas*, giue her a ſhield: *Dians* preſent a bow: witty Poems are fitte for wiſe heads, & examples of honor, for ſuch as triumph in vertue; ſo that ſeeing there hath few led more chaſte then an Italian *Philomela*, I thought none onely more fit to patronize her Honours then your Ladyſhippe, whoſe chaſtity is as farre ſpred, as you are eyther knowne or ſpoken of: If then my well meaning may not be miſconſtrued, but my preſumption pardoned, and my labours fauoured with your gracious acceptation, I haue what I aymed at, and what I expected, in the hope of which courteſie ſetting downe my reſt, I humbly take my leaue.

Your Ladiſhippes in all

dutifull ſeruice,

Robert Greene.

TO THE GENTLEMEN READers, Health.

IF the contents of lines could at life diſcouer the colour of the face, you ſhould, Gentlemen, ſee my ruddy cheekes manifeſt my open follies: but ſeeing paper cannot bluſh, I will confeſſe my fault, and ſo humbly craue pardon. I promiſed, Gentlemen, both in my Mourning Garment, *and* Farewell to Follies, *neuer to buſie my ſelfe about any wanton pamphlets againe, nor to haue my brayne counted ſo addle, as to ſet out any matter that were amorous: but yet am I come, contrary to vow and promiſe, once againe to the Preſſe with a labour of Loue, which I hatched long agoe, though now brought forth to light. If the Printer had not beene, I would haue had it thruſt out as an Orphant, without any name to father it: but at his earneſt intreaty I was content to ſubſcribe, though I abide your hard cenſures, and angry frownes for a penance. Therefore ſith the worke was writ afore my vow, and publiſhed vpon duety to ſo honourable and beautifull a Lady: I humbly ſue for fauour, and craue that you will beare with this fault, and hold me euerie way excuſed: which courteſie if you graunt me, I haue more than I deſerue, and as much as my deſire euery way can wiſh, and ſo farewell.*

Yours, Robert Greene.

THE LADY FITZ-VVATERS Nightingale.

THere dwelled in the City of Venice, nére the Rialto, an Earle of great excellence, both for the descent of his parentage, and largenesse of his patrimony, called I'l Conte Philippo Medico, a Gentleman euery way, not onely by birth, as being by the mothers side of the Æmilij, but euery way furnisht with ciuill vertues for peace, and martiall valour for the warres, as politicke at home, as resolute abroad: reuerenst of all, not for his gray haires, for he was young, but for his many vertues, wherein hee ouerwent men of age. This Conte Philippo had by the fauour of Fortune, and his owne foresight, linked himselfe to a young Gentlewoman in mariage, called Philomela Celij, at that time the wonder of Venice, not for her beauty, though Italy affoorded none so fayre, nor for her dowry, though she were the only daughter of the

Duke of Millain: but for the admirable honours of her mind, which were so many, and matchlesse, that vertue seemed to haue planted there the paradise of her perfection: her age exceeded not 17. yet appeared there such a simmetry of more then womanly excellence in euery action of this Venetian paragon, that Italy held her life as an instance of all commendable qualities: shee was modest without sullennesse, and silent, not as a sole, but because she would not be counted a blab: chast, & yet not coy, for the purest of all held her courteous: though she was young, yet she desired neyther to gad nor to gaze, nor to haue her beauty made common to euery bad companions eye: the vale she vsed for her face, was the couert of her owne house: for she neuer would goe abroad but in the company of her husband, and then with such bashfulnes, that shee seemed to hold her selfe faulty in stepping beyond the shadow of her owne mansion: thus was Philomela famous for her exquisite vertues, & Philippo fortunate for inioying so vertuous a paramour. But as there is no Antidot so precious, but being tempered with Antimonie, is infectious: nor no hart so soueraigne good, but art cã make simply ill: so Philippo was not so cõmendable for some good parts, as afterwards bad thought of for some vnworthy qualities. For though he had a wife euery way answerable to his own wish, both fayre to please his eye, and honest to content his humor, yet in seeking to quittance these vertues with loue, hee so ouerloued her, that he plagued her more with iealousie, then recompenst her with affection, insomuch that with a deepe insight, entring into the consideration of her beauty, & her youth, he began to suspect, that such as frequented his house for traffique (for the greatest men in Venice vsed marchandise) were rather drawne thither by a desire to see his wife, then for the speciall vse of any other his commodities. Feeding vpon this passion that gnaweth like enuy vpon her own flesh, he cal-

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led to mind, to which of his frends she shewed the most gracious looks, vpon whom she glanst the most smiling fauors, whose carver she would be at the table, to whom she would drink, & who had most courteous intertainement at her hands, these men he did most suspect & enuy, as those to whom he thought his wife for those grãted fauours most affectionate. Yet when he called to mind her chast vertues, and did ruminate the particularities of his Loues toward himselfe, he suppressed the suspicious flame of iealousie, with the assured proofes of her inuincible chastity; hammering these betwixt feare and hope, he built castles in the ayre, and reacht beyond the moon: one while swearing all women were false and inconstant, & then again protesting, if all women were so, yet not all, because Philomela was not so. In this iealous quandary he vsed to himself this quaint discourse: If loue be a blessing, Philippo, as yet proues in the end most bitter, how blest are they that neuer make triall of so sowre a sweet! A child stung with a Bee, will flie from the honey-combe; such as are bitten with vipers, will feare to sleepe on the grasse: but men toucht with the inconuenience of fancy, hunt with sighes to inrich themselues with that passion: what cõquest haue such as win fayre women? Euen the like victory that Alexander had in subduing the Scythians reconciled friends, who, the more they flattered him, the more he misvsted. Beauty is like the herbe Larix, cole in the water, but hote in the stomacke: precious, while it is a blossome, but preiudiciall, growen to a fruit: a iem not to be valued, if set in vertue, but disgrast with a bad foile, like a ring of gold in a swines snowt; yet what cõfort is there in life, if man had no solace, but man? women are sweet helps, & those kind creatures that God made to perfect vp mens excellence. Truth, Philippo, they be wonders of nature, if they wrong not nature: and admirable Angels, if they would not be drawn

with angels to become diuels. Oh, flatter not thy selfe in flattering them, for where they find submission, there they proclaime contempt: and if thou makest them thy mate, they will giue thee such a checkemate, that happily thou shalt liue by the losse all thy life after: what néeds this inuectiue humor against women, when thou hast such a wife, as euery way is absolute, both for beuty and vertue? let such as haue bene stung with the scorpion, be warned: speake thou as thou findest, and then thou wilt say, that women are creatures, as excellent in mind, as they be singular in complexion: as farre beyond men in inward vertues, as they exceed mē in exterior beauties. I grant all this: yet Philippo, the iuyce of the Helebozus is poyson; the greener the Alisander leaues be, the more bitter is the sappe, euery outward appearance is not an authenticall instance, women haue chaste eyes, when they haue wanton thoughts, and modest looks, when they harbour lasciuious wishes: the Eagle when he soareth neerest to the sunne, then he houers for his prey, the Salamander is most warm, when he lyeth furthest from the fire, and then are women most hart-hollow, when they are most lip-holy, and by these premisses, Philippo, argue of thy wiues precisenesse, for though she seeme chast, yet may she secretly delight in change, and though her countenance be coy to all, yet her conscience may be courteous to some one: when the sunne shines most garish, it foreshewes a showre, when the birds sing earely, there is a storme before night, womens flatteries are no more to be trusted thā an Astronomers Almanack, that proclaimeth that for a most fayre day, that proues most cloudy; and so of Philomela. As thus as the County Philippo was iarring with himselfe about this humour of iealosie, there came to him while he sate (for all this while he was in an Arbour in his Garden) a familiar friend of his, called Signeor Giouanni Lutesio, so priuate vnto

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the Earle in all his secret affaires, that hee concealed nothing from him which came within the compasse of his thoughts: this Signeor Giouanni seeing the County in a brown study, wakened him out of his muse with a merry greeting, & bad a penny for his thought: the Earle seeing his second selfe, his onely repository of his priuate passions, entertayned him very curteously, and after some familar speeches vsed betwirt thē, Giouanni began to question what the cause was of that melancholy dumpe that he found him in: the Earle fetching a great sigh, taking Lutesio by the hand, setting him down by him, began to rehearse from point to point what a iealous suspition he had of his wiues beauty, & that for all the shew of her honesty, hee somewhat doubted of her chastity. Giouanni, who with a reuerent loue fauored the Countesse, began somwhat sharpely to reproue the Earle, that he should admit of so foolish a passion, as iealousie, & misconster of her whose vertuous life was so famous through all Venice. As suspicious heads wāt not sophistrie to supply their mistrust, so Philip at that time was not barren of arguments, to proue the subtilty of women, their inconstancy, how they were faced like Ianus, having one full of furrowes, the other of smiles, swearing, he should neuer be merry at his hart, till he had made an assured proofe of her chastity, & with that he broke with Signeor Giouanni Lutesio, that hee should be the man to make experience of her honesty, although the Gentleman was very vnwilling to take such a taske in hand, doubting, lest in dallying with the flame, he might burn his finger, & so iniure his friend; yet at the importunate intreaty of Philippo, he promised to vndertake the matter, & by all meanes possible to assault the inuincible Fort of her chastity, protesting, that if he found her pliant to listen to his passions, hee would make it manifest to him without dissembling. Philippo glad of this, to graunt Giouanni opportunity to

court his wife, would be more often abroad, and that he might driue her the soner to listen vnto his sute, he vsed not that wonted loue and familiarity that hee was accustomed to doe, but quitted all her dutifull fauours with vncouth and disdainefull frownes, so that poore Philomela, who knew nothing of his compacted trechery, beganne to wonder what had altered her husbands wonted humour, and like a good wife she began to examine her owne conscience, wherein she had giuen him any occasion of offence, feeling her selfe guiltles (vnles his owne conceit deceiued him) she imagined that her husband affected some other Lady more than her selfe; which imagination she concealed with patience, & resolued not by reuealing it, to retriue him from his new intertained fancy, but with obedience, loue and silence to recouer her Philippo to fauour none but his Philomela. While thus her mind a little suspicious began to wauer, Lutesio began to lay his baytes to betray this silly innocent. Now you must imagine, he was a young Gentleman of a good house, of no meane wealth, nor any way made infortunate by nature, for he was counted the most fine and courtly Gentlemã in all Venice. This Lutesio therefore seeking fit opportunity to find Madam Philomela in a merry veyn (for time is called that Cappillata Ministra, that fauours Louers in their fortunes) watched so narrowly, that he found the Countesse sitting alone in her Garden, playing vpon a Lute many pretty Roundelayes, Borginets, Madrigals, and such pleasant lessons, all as it were, amorous loue, vowed in honour of Venus, singing to her Lute many pretty and merry ditties, some of her owne composing, and some written by some witty Gentlemen of Venice, thinking now time had smiled vpon him, by putting her in such an humorous veyne. At last hee heard her warble out this pleasant Ode.

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Philomelas Ode that ſhee ſung in her *Arbour.*

SItting by a Riuers ſide,
Where a ſilent ſtreame did glide,
Muſe I did of many things,
That the mind in quiet brings.
I gan thinke how ſome men deeme
Gold their god, and ſome eſteeme
Honour is the chiefe content,
That to man in life is lent.
And ſome others doe contend,
Quiet none, like to a friend.
Others hold, there is no wealth
Compared to a perfect health.
Some mans mind in quiet ſtands,
When he is Lord of many lands.
But I did ſigh, and ſayd all this
Was but a ſhade of perfect bliſs.
And in my thoughts I did approue,
Nought ſo ſweet as is true loue,
Loue twixt Louers paſſeth theſe,
When mouth kiſſeth and hart grees,
With folded armes and lippes meeting,
Each ſoule another ſweetly greeting.
For by the breath the ſoule fleeteth,
And ſoule with ſoule in kiſſing meeteth.
If Loue be ſo ſweet a thing,
That ſuch happy bliſſe doth bring,
Happy is loues ſugred thrall,
But vnhappy Maydens all,
Who eſteeme your Virgins bliſſes,
Sweeter then a wiues ſweet kiſſes.
No ſuch quiet to the mind,

As

As true loue with kiſſes kind.
But if a kiſſe proue vncha ſt,
Then is true loue quite diſgra ſt.
Though loue be ſweet, learn this of me
No loue ſweet but honeſty.

As ſoone as Philomela had ended her Ode, Signior Luteſio ſtept to her, & halfe mard her melody with this vnlookt for motion: I am glad Madam, to find you ſo ful of glee, womens minds ſet on mirth, ſhewes their thoughts are at quiet, when birds ſing early there hath been a ſweet deiy; ſo your mornings Antheme ſhewes your nights content, the ſubiect of your ſong, and the cenſure of my thoughts argue vpon concluſion: for likely it is, you haue found kiſſing ſweet, that ſo highly commend it; but as the old Prouerbe is, ſuch laugh as winne, and ſuch as Venus fauours, may afford her incenſe: loue is precious to ſuch as poſſeſſe their loue; but there is no hell, if loue be not hell to ſuch as dare not expreſſe their paſſions. Philomela ſeeing Luteſio tooke her napping in ſinging ſo merry an Ode, ſhewed in the bluſh of her cheekes, the baſhfulnes of her thoughts, yet knowing he was her huſbands familiar, ſhe cared the leſſe, and ſmiling, made him this pleaſant anſwere: Signior Luteſio, as I reliſht a wanton ſong at random, ſo I little lookt your eares ſhould haue been troubled with my muſick, but ſince you are a hearer of my hoarſe ditty, take it as you find it, and conſter of it as you pleaſe, I know mine own meaning beſt. In that I commend kiſſing, it argues me the more kind, and my huſband the more louing, in that I find lippe-loue ſo ſweet; women may be wantons in their huſbands, yet not immodeſt: and wiues are allowed to ſport, ſo their dallying be not diſhoneſt; yet had I known you had been ſo nie, I would haue been more ſilent, and at this word ſhe bluſht again, diſcouering by her looks, it

grieued her, any man (though neuer so familiar) should heare her so extraordinary pleasant: but to finde fish in Signior Lutesios fingers, because he glanced at disdaine in loue, she followed her reply thus: yet since, sir, what is past, cannot be recalde, I will ouerskippe the conceit of mine owne folly, and be so bold as to haue you vnder confession. What is the reason, Lutesio, you diuerslie declare of the fruition of loue: hath that diuine passion crept into your braines? Giouanni hearing her harpe on that string, strained it a pin higher thus. Diuine passion call you it Madam, nay rather a fury fetcht from hell, a madnes diued in the bottome of Tesiphon, an vnbridled desire, a restlesse agony, a continuall anguish, thus do I value loue, because my life is at an end by the wrongs of loue: such as are poysoned with rage wort, count it fatall, yet such as haue the pleasant drinke it in potions: the Nepenthian Nectar was very much commended of Vlisses, though condemned of Cyres: mens poems follow their passions, and they conclude as they are contented: then Madame, if all the world say, loue is a Heauen, yet must I say, desire is a hell: not that the beautious Saint, whom mine eye doth worship, and my heart doth honour, hath quitted my affection with disdaine: but that in not daring discouer my passions, I am put to a triple tormenting penance. At this he fetcht such a fained sigh, that simple meaning Philomela imagined the Gentleman was full of sorrow, and therefore beganne to comfort him thus. Why Signior Lutesio, haue you soared so high, that you doubt the scorching of your feathers? haue your desires taken flight so farre aboue your degree, that you feare a fall? is the Lady whom you loue so great of birth, that you dare not be your owne speaker? Loue, Lutesio, if honest, is lawfull, and may reape disdaine, but not disgrace. Desire is the daughter of destiny, and the simpathie of affections is so painted by the starres: Womens eyes

are not tied to high personages, but to exquisite perfections: and the greater oftimes they be in degrées, the lower they proue in loues: be she then, Lutesio, the statelieſt, the richeſt, the fayreſt in al Italy, feare not to court her: for happily she may grant, and she at the worſt can but say no. When I entred into thy wonted humours, how honestly wanton thou hast been amongſt women of high account: when I thinke of thy wealth, of thy vertues, of thy parentage, of thy person: I flatter not Lutesio, for in my opinion a frumpe amongſt friends is petty treason in effect; I cannot but wonder what she is that Lutesio dares not tell he loues, if without offence I may craue it, tel me her name, that I may censure of her qualities. Lutesio with a face full of discontent, made her this answere: Madame, as I dare not discourse my loues, so I will not discouer her name, I regard her honour as my life, and therefore onely suffice it, I am as far vnworthy of her, as she is beyond my reach to compasse. Philomela, who straight found the knot in the rush, began to imagine that it was some married wife that Lutesio aymed at: and therefore charged him by the loue that he bare to Philippo Medico, that he would tell her whether it was a wife or a mayd that hee thus earnestly affected. Lutesio briefly tolde her, that shee was not only a wife, but mayde to one, whom she almoſt as tenderly loued, as he did the Earle her husband: A Lady of honour and vertue, yet a woman, and therefore he hoped might be won, if his heart would serue him to be a wooer. Philomela hearing this, began to find a knot in the rush, and began to deeme it was some familiar of his that he was affected to: and therefore with a gentle frowne, as if she loued him, and yet mislikte of his fonnes in fancy, taking him by the hand, she began thus to schoole him.

Lutesio, now I see, the strongeſt Oake hath his sap, and his wormes: that Ramus will breed in the fayreſt

Ally,

Ah, and that thy mustred Angelica beares a deuil, that shining like pearle, being tasted, is most pretudicial: that the holiest men in shew are oft the hollowest mē in substance, and where there is the greatest flourish of vertue, there in time appeareth the greatest blemish of vanity. I speake this by all, but apply it to them, who seeming euery way absolute, will proue euery way dissolute. Hath not Venice holde thee more famous for thy good parts than for thy parentage: and yet well borne, and valued thee more for liuing well, than wealthily, & yet thy patrimony is not small. Oh Lucetio, darken not these honours with dishonesty, nor for the foolish and fading passion of lust, reach not an euerlasting pennance of infamy. As I mislike of thy choice, so I can but wonder at thy change, to see thee altred in maners, that wert earst so moyest: who was esteemd amongst Ladies for his ciuill conceits as Lucetio: thou wert toothed for amongst the chastest for thy choyce qualities, amongst youth for thy wit, amongst age for thy honest behauior, desired of all, because offensiue to none: & notwithstanding thou prosecute this bad purpose, intend this base loue, to violate the honour of a Venetian Lady, looke to be hated of all that are vertuous, because thou art growen so sodainly vicious, and to be banished out of the company of all that are honest, because thou seekest to make one dishonest; then as thou louest thy fame, leaue off this loue, and as thou valuest thine honour, so vale the appetite of thy dishonest thoughts. Besides, Lucetio, enter into the consideration of the fault, & by that, measure what will be the sequell of thy folly: thou attemptest to dishonour a wife, nay, the wife of thy friend: in doing this, thou shalt lose a sweet companion, and purchase thy selfe a fatall enemy, thou shalt displease God, and grow odious to men; hazard the hope of thy grace, and assure thy selfe of the reward of sinne: adultery, Lucetio, is commended in none, condemned in all, and punished

in the end eyther with this worlds infamy, or heauens anger: it is a desire without regarde of honesty, and a gaine with greater reward of misery: a pleasure bought with paine, a delight hatched with disquiet, a content possessed with feare, and a sinne finished with sorrow. Barbarous Nations punish it with death: mere Atheists in Religion auoyde it by instinct of Nature: such as glory God with no honor, couet to glorify themselues with honesty: and wilt thou that art a Christian thane, crucifie Christ anew, by making the harbour of thy soule the habitation of Sathan? M. Lucesio, as thou blushest at my words, so banish thy bad thoughts, and being created by God, seeke not to despise thy creator in abusing his creatures: A womans honesty is her honour, and her honour the chiefest essence of her life: then in seeking to blemish her vertues with lust, thou aymest at no lesse disgrace then her death: and yet Lucesio, this is not all; for in winning her loue, thou losest a friend, than which, there is nothing more precious, as there is nothing more rare: as Corruptio vnius est generatio alterius; so the losse of a friend, is the purchase of an enemy, and such a mortall foe, as will apply all his wits to thy wracke, intrude all his thoughts to thy ruine, & passe away his dayes, cares and nights slumbers, in dreaming of thy destruction. For if brute beasts will reuenge such brutish wrongs as adultery, then imagine no man to be so patient, that will ouerpasse so grosse an iniury: assure thy selfe of this, Lucesio, if her husband heare of your loues, he will ayme at your lines; he will leaue no confection vntempered, no poyson vnsearcht, no mynerall vntryed, no Aconiton vnbrused, no herb, tree, root, stone, simple or secret vnsought, till reuenge hath satisfied the burning thirst of his hate: so shalt thou feare with whom to drink, with whom to conuerse, whē to walke, how to performe thy affayres, onely for doubt of her reuenging husband, and thy protested enemy. If

such,

such vnlawfull lust, such vnkind desires, such vnchast loue procure so great losse, and so many perils, reuert it Lucesio, as a passion most pernitious, as a sinne most odious, and a gayne full of most deadly sorrows. Though this be much, Lucesio, yet this is not all: for many loue that are neuer liked, and euery one that wooes is not a winner: Diuers desire with hope, and yet their wishes are to small effect: suppose the Lady whom thou louest is honest; then is thy loue as vnlikely as Ixions was to Iuno; who ayming at the substance, was made a sole with a shadow. I tell thee, it is more easie to cut a Diamond with a glasse, to pierce steele with a fether, to tye an Elephant with a thred of silke, than to alienate an honest womans loue from her husband; their hearts be harbours of one loue, closets of one contents, Celles, whereinto no amorous Idea but one can enter, as hard to be pearst with new fangled affection, as the Adamant to be made soft with fire. A Lady, Lucesio, that regardeth her honour, will die with Lucrece, before she agree to lust, she will eate coales with Portia, before she proue vnchaste, she will thinke euery misery sweet, euery mishap content, before shee condiscend to the allurements of any wanton Lecher. Imagine then her whom thou louest to be such a one, then will it qualifie thy hope, cole thy desires, and quench those vnbridled thoughts that leade thee on to such follyes: for if she be a wanton, what doest thou winne her that many hath wonne, and more than thy selfe may banquish: a light huswife and a lewd minion, that after she hath yeelded the flower of her loue, Thesius will marry with Menelaus, and then runne away with Paris: amorous to euery one, because she is humourous to all: Then Lucesio, seeing if thou likest an honest Lady, thy loue is past hope; and if thou wooest a wanton, thou shalt gain but what others haue left; leaue both, and becom as hitherto thou hast bin an honest gentleman in all mens opinions, so shalt thou liue well

thought of, and dis honourably: and with that, smiling, she asked him, if she had not played the Preacher well. But Lutesio wondring at her vertues, made no answer he was so amazed: but rested silent; which Philomela perceyuing, to waken him out of his dumpe, she take againe her Lute in her hand, and began to sing this following Dade.

Philomelaes second Oade.

IT was frosty winter season,
And faire Floras wealth was geason:
Meades that earst with greene were spred,
With choyce flowers diapred,
Had tawny vales: Cold had scattered,
What the Springs and Nature planted:
Leaueleſſe boughes there might you see,
All except fayre Daphnes tree,
On their twigs no byrdes pearched,
Warmer couerts none they searched;
And by Natures secret reason,
Framed their voyces to the season:
With their feeble tunes bewraying,
How they grieued the springs decaying:
Frosty Winter thus had gloomed
Each fayre thing that sommer bloomed,
Fields were bare, and trees vnclad,
Flowers withered, byrdes were had:
When I saw a shepheard fold,
Sheepe in Coate to shunne the cold:
Himselfe sitting on the graſſe,
That with frost withered was:
Sighing deepely, thus gan say,
Loue is folly when astray:
Like to loue no passion such,

For

For his madneſſe, if too much:
If too little, then deſpaire:
If too high, he beates the ayre;
With bootleſſe cries, if too low:
An Eagle matcheth with a Crow.
Thence growes iarres, thus I find,
Loue is folly, if vnkind;
Yet doe men moſt deſire
To be heated with this fire:
Whoſe flame is ſo pleaſing hot,
That they burne, yet feele it not:
Yet hath loue another kind,
Worſe than theſe vnto the mind:
That is, when a vvantons eye
Leades deſire cleane awry,
And vvith the Bee doth reioyce,
Euery minute to change choyce,
Counting he were then in bliſſe,
If that each fare fall vvere his:
Highly thus in loue diſgraſte,
When the louer is vnchaſte;
And vvould taſte of fruit forbidden,
Cauſe the ſcape is eaſily hidden.
Though ſuch loue be ſweet in brewing
Bitter is the end enſuing;
For the humour of loue he ſhameth,
And himſelfe vvith luſt defameth;
For a minutes pleaſure gayning,
Fame and honour euer ſtayning.
Gazing thus ſo farre avvry,
Laſt the chip fals in his eye,
Then it burns that earſt but heate him,
And his owne rod gins to beate him;
His choyceſt ſweets turne to gall,
He finds laſt his ſins thrall:
That wanton women in their eyes,

Mens

Mens deceiuings doe compriſe.
That homage done to fayre faces,
Doth diſhonour other graces:
If lawleſſe loue be ſuch a ſinne,
Curſt is he that liues therein:
For the gaine of Venus game,
Is the downefall vnto ſhame:
Here he pauſ'd and did ſtay,
Sigh'd and roſe, and went avvay.

As ſoone as Philomela had ended her Dade, ſhe ſmiled on Luteſio, and ſayd; hoping then that this priuate conference ſhall be a concluſion of your paſſions, and a final reſolution to reuerſe your thoughts from this diſordinate folly of loue: I will at this time ceaſe to ſpeake any more, becauſe I hope you will reſt from your motion: and ſo taking him by the hand, ſhe led him into the parlour, where amongſt other company, they paſt away the day in pleaſant chat, till that Luteſio found conuenient opportunity to diſcouer to Philippo the reſolution of his wife, who thought euery minute a month till he had heard what anſwere ſhe had made to Luteſio. At laſt they went both together, walking into a garden that adioyned to the houſe of Philippo: and there Luteſio, who reuealed from point to point what he had mentioned afar off to Philomela, and how honourably and honeſtly ſhe replyed, rehearſing, what a coling carde of good counſell ſhe gaue him, able to haue quayled the hoteſt ſtomacke, or quenched the moſt eager flame that fancy could fire the mind of man withall: entring into a large and high commendation of the chaſtity, wiſdome, and generall vertues of Philomela, auerring, that he thought there was not a woman of more abſolute qualities, nor honorable diſpoſition in al Italy. Philippo, the more he drunk, the more he thirſted, and the more he was perſwaded to truſt in her honeſty, the more he was ſuſpitious, and doub-

doubted of her vertue: for he replyed still in his iealous humour, that womens words were no warrants of their truth, that as the Onix is inwardly most cold, whē it is outwardly most hot: so womens words are like the cries of Lapwings, farthest frō their thoughts, as they are from their nests: they proclaime silence with their tongues, modesty with their eyes, chastity with their actions, when in their hearts they are plotting, how to grant an amorous pleasure to their louers. Tush, sayes Philippo, womens tongues are tipt with deceit: they can sing with the Nightingale, though they haue a prick at their brests: they can lend him a cherry lippe, whom they hartily loath, and fawn vpon their husbands necks, when they giue their louers a winke: Though my wife hath made a fayre shew of vertue, it is no authenticall proofe of her honesty, eyther she mistrusted, or misdoubted of your sorcery, or els she would seeme hard in the winning, that her chastity might bee holden the more chary: for, be she neuer so wanton, she will seem modest, and the most common Curtezan will to a no nice seeme the most coy matron: they haue their countenance at commaund, their words at wil, their oathes at pleasure, and al to shadow their scapes with the masks of vertue. Rodope seemed coy to Psanneticus, els had a courtezan neuer conquered a King: Hermia chaste to Aristotle, else had she not bewitcht a Philosopher: Platoes ouerworne trull true to him, else had she not been mistresse of his thoughts. I tel thee Lutesio, they haue more wiles then the sun hath beams, to betray the simple meaning of bestotted louers. Therefore though shee vttered a legend of good lessons, beleeue her not. Though the Hare take squat she is not lost at the first default; apply thy wits, try her by letters, write passionately, & heare her answere, and assure thy self, if thou cunningly cast forth the lure, she will son be reclaymed to thy fist. Thus importunate was Philippo vpon his friend Lutesio, that at

the laſt, he craued licenſe to depart for a while, leauing Philippo meditating of his melancholy, while hee went into his chamber, where taking pen and paper he wrote Philomela this cunning letter.

Lucſio to the fayreſt Philomela, wiſheth what he vvants himſelfe.

IT is no wonder, Philomela, if mens minds be ſubiect to loue, when their eyes are the inſtruments of deſire, nor is any blame worthy for affecting, when as the ſight of man is a ſenſe that viewing euery thing muſt of force allow of ſome thing: I ſpeake not, ſweet Lady, philoſophically as a Scholler, but paſſionately as a louer, whoſe eyes haue been ſo lauiſh in ouer high lookes, that eyther they muſt haue their longing, or elſe I die through their ouer-liking: for as too ſweet perfumes make the ſenſe to ſurfet, and the moſt bright colours ſooneſt blemiſh the ſight; ſo I in gazing on the choyce perfections of beauty, haue dazeled mine eyes, and fired my heart with deſire, that none but the fruition of that bleſſed obiect, can ſaue me from being loues curſed abiect. Now Madame, the rare Idea that thus through the applauſe of mine eye hath bewitched my heart, is the beautious Image of your ſweet ſelfe. Pardon me, if I preſume, when the extremity of loue pricks me forward. Faults that grow by affection, ought to be forgiuen, becauſe they come of conſtraint; then

then Madam, reade with fauour, and cenſure with mer-
cy, for ſo long I dallyed with the Flie about the can-
dle, that I began to feele ouer much heat would breed
my harm; I haue played ſo long with the Pynew at the
bayte, that I am ſtrucken with the hooke: I haue view-
ed your beauty with ſuch delight, and conſidered of your
vertues with ſuch deſire, that in your gracious lookes
lies the onely hope of my life. Ah Philomela, were not
my loue extreame, my paſſions paſſing all meaſure, my
affection too full of anguiſh: I would haue concealed
my thoughts with ſilence, & haue ſmothered my griefes
with patience: but eyther I muſt liue by reuealing it,
or die by repreſſing it; I feare thou wilt here obiect,
Philippo is my friend, and then I am of little faith to
proffer him this wrong; I confeſſe this is a truth, and
were worthy of blame, were I not bewitcht by loue,
who neither admitteth exceptions of faith or friendſhip:
if it be a paſſion that controlleth the gods, no wonder
at all if it conquer and commaund men. If ſonnes diſo-
bey their Fathers to haue their deſires, it is more tole-
rable to cracke friendſhip for the conqueſt of loue. Why
then did Nature frame beauty to be ſo excellent, if ſhee
had tied the winning of it within exceptions? If that a
friend may fault with his friend for a kingdom, nodoubt
faith may be broken for loue, that is a great deale more
puiſſant then Kings, and much more precious then Dia-
dems: chiefly, if that the party be chary to haue regard
of his miſtreſſe honour, what the eye ſees not, Philo-
mela, neuer hurteth the heart, a ſecret loue impeacheth
not chaſtity. Iuno neuer frowned when Iupiter made his
eſcape in a cloud. Priuate pleaſures haue neuer inioy-
ned vnto them any penance, and ſhe is alwayes counted
chaſt inough, that is chary inough: then Madam, let
him not die for loue, whom, if you pleaſe, you may bleſſe
with loue.

It may be, you will reply, that Philippo is a Conte,

and a great deale my ſuperiour, and the ſupreme of your heart, therefore not to bee wronged with an arriuall. Conſider, Madame, Kings doe breake many vnknowne ſcapes: Loue will play the wanton amongſt the greateſt Lords: Women are not made ſuch chaſte Nunnes, but they may let much water ſlippe by the Mill that the Miller knoweth not of: They may loue their husbands with one of their eyes, and fauour a friend with the other. Since then, Madam, I haue been ſtung with the Scorpion, and cannot be helpt or healed by none but by the Scorpion: that I am wounded with Achilles launce, and I muſt be healed with his Truncheon: that I am intangled and ſnared in your beauty, and muſt be ſet at liberty onely by your loue: Looke vpon my paſſions, and pitty them, let mee not die for deſiring your ſweet ſelfe, but rather grant me fauour, and enioy ſuch a Louer, as will prize your honour before his life, and at all times be yours in all dutifull ſeruice whileſt he liues, expecting ſuch an anſwere as is agreeing to ſuch diuine beauty, which cannot be cruell, or according vnto my deſtiny, which be it ſiniſter, will be my death: Farewell.

Yours euer, though neuer

yours,

Giouanni Luteſio.

Hauing finiſhed his Letter thus amorouſly, hee remembred himſelfe, and although Philippo ſtayed for him in the garden, yet he ſtept once again to his ſtandiſh, and wrote vnder this following ſonnet:

Natura nihil fruſtra.

On women Nature did beſtow two eyes,

Like

Like Hemians bright lamps, in matchles beauty ſhining,
Whoſe beames doe ſooneſt captiuate the wiſe
And wary heads, made rare by Arts refining.
But vvhy did Nature in her choyce combining,
Plant tvvo faire eyes vvithin a beautious face,
That they might fauour tvvo vvith equall grace?

Venus did ſooth vp Vulcan vvith one eye,
With th'other granted Mars his vviſhed glee:
If ſhe did ſo, vvhom Heimens did deſie,
Thinke loue no ſinne, but grant an eye to me,
In vayne elſe nature gaue two ſtars to thee:
If then two eyes may well two friends maintaine,
Allow of two, and proue not Nature vayne.

Natura repugnare
belluinum.

After he had ended this Sonnet, he went, and ſhewed thē to Signior Philippo, who liked well of his paſſionate humour, and deſired nothing more then to heare what anſwere his wife would make to theſe amorous poems: therfore that he might grant Luteſio the fitter opportunity to deliuer them, he toke a ſkiffe, and went with ſundry other Gentlemen his familiars, to ſolace himſelfe vpon the waters. In the mean while Luteſio, who was left alone by himſelfe, beganne to enter into the leaſt diſpoſition of a iealous man, that would hazard the honour of his wife, to content his owne ſuſpitious humour, and whette on a friend to a fained fancy, which in time might grow to an vnfained affection: ſo that ſmyling to himſelfe, he beganne thus to murmure in his mind. Is not he worthy to finde that ſeekes, and deſerueth hee not many blowes, that craues to be beaten? Sith Philippo will buy the Buckes head, is he not worthy to haue the hornes? and ſeeing

he will néeds haue me court his wife in ieſt, were it not well if hee might haue the Cuckow in earneſt? Knowes he not, that frumpes amongſt friends grow at laſt to open anger? that pretty ſportings in loue, end oftentimes in pretty bargaines? that it is ill ieſting with edge toles, and of all cattell worſt cauilling with fayre women? for beauty is a bayte that will not bee dallyed with. But I loue him too well, and I honour the Lady too much, to motion ſuch a thought in earneſt: though he be fooliſh, I know her too honeſt to grant loue to the greateſt Monarch of the world.

While he was thus muſing with himſelfe, Philomela came into the Garden with two of her waiting women, who ſeeing Luteſio in a dumpe, thought hee was deuiſing of his new loue: whereupon ſhee ſtept to him, and beganne to aſke him, if he proceéded in his purpoſe. I, Madam, quoth he, if I meane to perſeuer in life, and with that the water ſtode in his eyes, whether it was that hee had an onion in his napkin to make him weépe, or that he had ſuckte that ſpeciall quality from his mother, to let fall teares when he liſt, I know not: but ſhe perceyuing hee watered his plants, began ſomewhat to pitty his paſſions, and aſked him, if yet hee had made the motion: No Madam, quoth Luteſio, but here I haue written her my mind, and pleaſe it you, you ſhall be my Secretary, both to reade my letter, and ſee her name, for I know you will conceale it. Philomela deſirous to ſee what Lady it was Luteſio was in loue withall, as Natura mulierum Nouitatis auida, tooke it very kindly at Luteſios hands, that he would participate his ſecrets vnto her, and promiſed not onely to be ſilent, but to yéeld her opinion of the hope of his ſucceſſe; ſo ſhee tooke the letter and promiſed the nert morning to giue it him againe, and ſo they fell into other chat, talking of ſundry matters, as their preſent occaſions did miniſter, till at laſt Philomela with child

to

to see the contents of the Letter, toke her leaue and went into her Closet, where vnripping the Seales, she found lines far vnfitting to her expectation.

As soone as shée saw Lutesios loue was meant to her, shee rent the paper in a thousand peeces, and exclaimed against him in most bitter tearmes, vowing her Lord should bee reuenged vpon him for this intended villany, or else hee should refuse her for his wife: thus alone while shee breathed out most hard inuectiues against him, yet at last, that she might aggrauate her husbands displeasure the more against him, she gathered vp the peeces, and laying them together, read them ouer, where, perceyuing his passions, & thinking them to grow from a mind full of fancy; hauing somewhat cooled her choler, shee resolued not to tell her husband, lest if hee should kill Lutesio, shee might bee thought the occasion of the murther, and so bring her vnblemisht honour in question, and therefore she toke paper and inke, and wrote him this sharpe reply.

Philo-

Philomela to the moſt falſe *Luteſio*, wiſheth what he wants himſelfe.

IF thou wonderſt what I wiſh thee, Luteſio, enter into thine owne want, and thou ſhalt find, I deſire thou mightſt haue more honour, and leſſe diſhoneſty, elſe a ſhort life, and a long repentance: I ſee now that Hẽblocke whereſoeuer it bee plãted, will bee peſtilent, that the ſerpent with the brightеſt ſcales ſhrouded the moſt fatall venome, that the Ruby, whatſoeuer foyle it hath will ſhew red, that when nature hatcheth vicious, nurture will neuer make vertuous.

Thou art like, Luteſio, vnto the Hyſop, growing in America, that is liked of ſtrangers for the ſmell, and hated of the inhabitants for the operation, being as preiudiciall in the one, as delightſome in the other: ſo thou in voyce art holden honeſt, and therefore liked, but being once looked into, and found laſciuious, thou wilt grow into as great contempt with thy familiars, as now thou art honoured amongſt ſtrangers. Hadſt thou none anſwerable to thine appetite, but Philomela's nor

none

none to wrong, but Philippo: canst thou with mee so much harme, or owe him so little friendship, I honouring thee so kindly, and he louing thee so dearely: how canst thou loue the wife, that betrayest the husband: or how shall I deeme thou wilt proue constant in loue, that art falce in thy faith, and to such a friend, who next my selfe counteth thee second in his secrets? Base man that harbours so bad a thought, ransacke thy thoughts and rippe vp the end of thy attempt, and then if that shame hath not vtterly abandoned thee, thou wilt for feare of shame leaue off thy lust, and grow into more grace.

Tell me, Lutesio, and if thou speakest not what thou knowest, I bethe thee, wherein hast thou seene me so light: or haue my gestures beene so lewde, that thou shouldest gather hope to gayne thy loue? hath Venice suspected me for a wanton: hath Italy deemed me dissolute: haue I graunted vnto thee, or to any other, extraordinary fauours: haue I beene froward to my Lord, or by any wanton trickes shewed the wracke of my chastity: if any of these blemishes haue disgraced me, speake it, and I will call for grace, and amend them, but neuer a whit the more befriend thee: for whereas I honorably thought of Lutesio, vnlesse I finde thy humor changed, I will ayme at thy dishonour, and proclaime thee an enemy to Ladies, cause thou art a friend to lust. Ah Lutesio, I would sooner haue deemed the seas should haue become drie, the earth barren, and the sunne without light, then thou wouldest haue sought to violate the honestly of Philomela, or blemish the honour of Philippo: Philippos wealth is at thy will, his sword at thy commaund, his heart plaste in thy bosome, hee reserueth of all that he hath for thee, saue onely mee to himselfe; and canst thou bee so vnkind to rob him of his onely loue, that owes thee so much loue: I vdge the best, and I hope that I imagine truth, thou doest it but

to trie me: if it be so, I brooke it with the more patience, yet discontent thou shouldest trouble mine eyes with a wanton line: but if thy passionate humour be in earnest, it contents me not to deny thee, but to defie thee; I proclaime my selfe enemy to thy life, as thou art enuious of mine, and my husbands honour. I will incense Philippo to reuenge with his sword, what I cannot requite with words, and neuer liue in quiet, till I see thee die, infamous Traytor, as thou art, vnlesse thy grace be such, to cease from thy treachery, come no more in my husbands house, lest thou loke for a dagger in thy bosome: feede not at my Table, lest thou quaffe with Alexander thy fatall draught. To bee briefe, loue not Philomela, if thou mean to liue, but loke vp to Heauen, become penitent for thy fond and foolish passions: let mee see repentance in thy eyes, and remorse in thy actions: beas thou hast ben, a friend to Philippo, and a fauourer of mine honour, and though thou hast deserued but meanely, yet thou shalt bee welcome heartily, and whatsoeuer is past, vpon thy penitence, I will pardon, and for this time conceale it from the knowledge of the Conty, otherwise set down thy rest, wee will not both liue together in Italy. Farewell.

Neuer thine, though she were
not *Philippes*,

Philomela Media.

Hauing ended her letter, she resolued to answere his sonnet, as well to shew her wit, as to choake his wantonnesse, and therefore she writ this Poeme.

Quot Corda, tot Amores.

Natura

Nature foreſeeing how men would deuiſe
More wiles than *Proteus*, women to entiſe,
Graunted them two, and thoſe brighe ſhining eyes,
To pearce into mans faults if they were wiſe.
For they with ſhew of vertue maſke their vice,
Therefore to womens eyes belongs theſe gifts,
The one muſt loue, the other ſee mens ſhifts.

Both theſe await vpon one ſimple heart,
And what they chooſe, it hides vp without change.
The Emrauld will not with his portraite part,
Nor will a womans thoughts delight to range.
They hold it bad to haue ſo baſe exchange.
One heart, one friend, though that two eyes do chooſe
No more but one, and heart will neuer looſe him. (him,

Cor vnum, Amor vnus.

As ſoone as ſhe had ſealed vp her letter, ſhe brookt no delay, but ſent it ſtraight by one of her wayting women to Luteſio, whom ſhe found ſitting alone in his chamber reading vpon a booke; Interrupting his ſtudy, ſhe deliuered him the letter, and the meſſage of her Lady. Luteſio kind, gaue the Gentlewoman a kiſſe: for he thought ſhe valued a lip fauour more then a peece of gold, & with great curteſie gaue her leaue to depart: ſhe was ſcarſe out of the chamber, but he opened the letter, and found what he expected, the reſolution of a chaſt Counteſſe, to worthy of ſo tealous a huſband, praying in himſelfe the honourable mind of Philomela, he went abroad to finde out Philippo, whom at laſt he met, neare vnto the Arſonale; walking together to Luteſios houſe, there he ſhewed Philippo his wiues letter, and did comment vpon euery line, commending greatly her chaſtity, & deeply condemning his ſuſpition. Tuſh, ſayes Philippo, all this

wind shakes no corne. Helena writ as sharpely to *Paris*, yet she ran away with him. Trie her once again, Lutesio and for my life thou shalt finde calmer words, & sweeter lines: Lutesio with his eyes full of choler made him this answere. *Philippo*, if thou bee'st so sottish, with Cephalus to betray thy wiues honour, perhaps with him, proue the first that repent thy trechery: When the wilde Boare is not chased, thou mayest chasten him with a wand, but being once indammaged with the dogges, he is dismall.

Women that are chast while they are trusted, proue wantons, being suspected causelesse: Iealousie is a spurre to reuenge. Beware *Philomela* heare not of this practise, lest she make thee eate with the blind man many a fire. Canst thou not, *Philippo*, content thy self, that thy Lady is honest, but thou must plot the meanes to make her a harlot? If thou likest hunters fees so well, seeke another woodman; for I will not play an appleſquire, to feede thy humours. If Venice knew as much as I am priuy to, they would hold thee worthy of that thou hast not, and her a sole, if shee gaue thee not what thou seekest for. I am sorry, I haue wronged her vertues by so bad a motion: but henceforth, *Philippo*, hope neuer to get me in the like veyne; and more, if thou leauest not from being so vaine, I will abandon thy company, and renounce thy friendship for euer.

Philippo hearing his friend Lutesio so short, desired him to be content, patient and silent, and he would raze out the suspicious conceit that haunted him, and for euer after grace his good wife with more loue and honour: & with that, *Philippo* and he walked to the Riako: but Lutesio would not for that night goe to the house of *Philippo*, lest his presence might be offensiue to *Philomela*, and so driue him into some dumpish choller.

Philippo comming home, was welcome to his Lady, and being somewhat late, they sate downe louingly to supper. The first course was no sooner come in, but *Philippo*

lippo sayd, he maruelled, that all that day he had not seen Lutesio: this he spake with his eyes on Philomelas face, to see what countenance she would hold at his name, the little suspecting, her husband had been priuy to her new found Louer, blusht, and kept her selfe silent. Philippo took no knowledge of any thing, but past it ouer smoothly, and vsed his former wonted familiarity to his wife. The next day going abroad, Lutesio came to his house, and went not in as his custom was, boldly, but walking in the Hall, asked one of the Earles Gentlemen, if the Countesse was stirring: hee maruelling at Lutesios strangenesse, smiled, and said, sir, what needs this question? my Lady is alone at her booke, goe vp sir, and helpe her in her Pulses. I pray you, quoth Lutesio, go to the Countesse, and tell her I am here, and would if her leysure serued her, gladly haue a word with her. The Gentleman, though he wondered at these vncouth wordes of Lutesio, yet he went vp and tolde his Lady the message, who presently leauing her booke and company, all to auoyde out of the Chamber, sent for him vp; who no sooner came into her presence, but she saluted him with such a frown, that he stood as mortified, as if he had bin strucken with the eye of a Baseliske. Philomela seeing him in this passionate agony, began with him thus.

I cannot tell Lutesio, how to salute thee eyther with lookes or speeches, seeing thou art not as thou seemedst once my wel-wisher, and my husbands friend. The Lapidaries value the stones no longer then they hold their vertues: no? I prize a Gentleman no longer than he regards his honour. For, as a Diamond with a cloud is cast into the Goldsmithes dust: so a Gentleman without credit, is carrelesly holden for refuse. I read thy letter, and I answered it: but tell me, how shall I take it? as thou replyest, so wil I intertain: if to trie me, thou shalt finde the more fauour: if to betray me, hope for nothing but reuenge. Lutesio hearing Philomela so honoura-

bly peremptory, with blushing cheekes made her this answere.

Madam, as my face bewrayes my folly, and my ruddy hue my rechlesse show, so let my words bee holden for witnesses of my truth, and thinke whatsoeuer I say is soth: by the faith of a Gentleman, then assure your selfe, mine eye hath euer loued you, but neuer vnlawfully: and what humble duety I haue showne you, hath beene to honour you, not to dishonest you. This letter was but to make triall how you liked Philippo, to whom I owe such faith, that it would grieue me, hee should haue a wife false: I know not, Madam, what humour drew mee on to it. I am sure, neyther your wanton lookes, nor light demeanours, but a kinde of passion destined to dreede myne owne preiudice, if your fauour exceede not my deserts: If therefore your Ladyshippe shall forgette and forgiue this folly, and conceale it from the Earle, who perhaps may take it meant in earnest, enioyne me any penance, Madam, and I will performe it with patience.

Philomela hearing Lutesio thus penitent, began to cleare vp her countenance, and sayde to him thus: It is folly to rubbe the skarre, when the wound is almost whole, or to renew quarrels, when the matter is put in compromise: therefore omitting all, Lutesio, I pardon thee, and promise neyther to remember thy folly my selfe, nor yet to reueale it to my husband, but thou shalt bee euery way as heartily welcome to me, as thou wert wont: onely this shall be thy penance, to sweare vpon this Bible, neuer hereafter to motion me of any dishonesty. To this Lutesio willingly granted, and tooke his oath: so were they reconciled, and the Countesse called for a cuppe of wine, and dronke to him: and after, to passe away the after noone, they fell to chesse: after a mate or two, the Countesse was

called

called aside, by one Margaretta Stromia, a Venetian Lady, that came to visite her, and Lucesio went downe to walke in the garden by chance: as he was striking through the Parlour, he met the Earle, whom he tooke by the arme, and led him into one of the priuy walkes, and there recounted vnto him, what reconcilement was growne betweene him and the Countesse his wife, which highly pleased the Earle, so that without any more crosse humors, they past a long time in all contented pleasures: till Fortune, whose enuy is to subuert content, and whose delight is to turne comicke mirth, into tragicke sorrowes, entred into the Theatre of Philomelaes life, and beganne to acte a balefull Scæane in this manner.

Philippo, who had not quite extinguished suspition, but couered vp in the cinders of melancholy, the glowing sparkes of iealousie, beganne afresh to kindle the flame, and to conceit a new insight into his wiues actions, and whereas generally he mistrusted her before, and onely thought her a wanton, as she was a woman: Now he suspected, that there was too much familiarity betweene her and Lucesio, and flatly, that betweene them both, hers were the hornes: yet accuse her he durst not, because her parentage was great, her friends many, and her honestly most of all. Neyther had he any probable articles to obiect against her, and therefore was silent, but euer murmuring with himselfe to this effect.

Philippo, thou wert too fond, to plotte Lucesio a meanes of his loue, graunting him opportunity to woo, which is the sweetest friend to loue: men cannot dally with fire, nor sport with affection: for hee that is a suter in iest, may be a speeder in earnest: haue not such a thought in thy mind, Philippo, for as Lucesio is thy friend, so is he faithfull: as Philome-

lomela is thy wife, so thee is honest: and yet both may ioyne issue, and proue dissemblous; Louers haue Argus eyes, to bee wary in their doings, and Angels tongues, to talke of holinesse, when their hearts are most lasciuious: though my wife returned a taunting Letter to him openly, yet shee might send him sweete lines secretly, her satiable answere was but a cloake for the rayne: for, euer since, they haue beene more familiar, and lesse asunder, nor shee is neuer merry, if Lutesio beginne not the mirth, if Lutesio be not at Table, her stomacke is queasie, as when the Halciones hatch, the Sea is calmst, and the Phenix neuer spreades her winges, but when the Sunne beames shine on her nest. So Philomela is neuer frolicke, but when she is matcht in the company of Lutesio, this courtesie growes of some priuate kindnes, which if I can finde out by iust proofe and circumstance, let me alone to reuenge to the vttermost.

In this iealous passion, hee passed away many dayes, and many moneths, till one day Lutesio being alone in the Chamber with Philomela, the Earle comming in, and hearing they were together, went charily vp the stayres, and peeping in at the locke-hole, saw them two standing at a bay-window, hand in hand, talking very familiarly: which sight stroke such a suspitious fury into his head, that hee was halfe frantick, yet did hee smother, what hee thought in silence, and going downe into the Garden, left them two still together: Being there alone by himselfe, hee cast a thousand suspitious doubts in his head, of Lutesio, and his wiues dishonesty, intending to watch more narrowly, to take them in a trappe, while they poore soules little mistrusted his iealousie.

He had not stayed in the Garden long, ere Lutesio and the Countesse went downe together to walke, where they found the Earle in his dumpes; but they

two

two wakened him from his dolefull melancholy, with the pleasant deuices of Signeor Lutesio, Philippo making at all no shew of his suspition, but entertayned his friend with all accustomed familiarity; so that they past away that day with all contented pleasures, till night, the infortunate brǽder of Philomelas misfortunes grew on, when she and the Earle went to bed together: for, as she lay talking, shee started, being new quickened with Child, and fæling the vnperfect Infant stirre, Philippo asking the cause, shee ready to weepe for ioy, sayde, Good newes my Lord, you shall haue a young sonne: at this, his heart wared colde, and hee questioned of her, if shee were with childe: she taking his hand, laying it on her side, sayd; Fæle my Lord, you may perceyue it moue; with that, it leapte against his hand: When shee creeping into his bosome, beganne amorously to kisse him, and commend him; that, though for the space of foure yeares that they had bǽne married, she had had no child, yet at last hee had played the mans part, and gotten her a boy.

This toucht Philippo at the quicke, and doubled the flame of his iealousie, that as a man halfe lunaticke, hee leapte out of the bed, and drawing his rapier, beganne thus to menace poore Philomela. Incestuous strumpet, more wanton then Lamia, more lasciuious then Lais, and more shameless then Pasophane, whose life as it hath bǽne shadowed with painted holinesse, so it hath beene full of pestilent villanies; thou hast suckt subtilty from thy mother, thou hast learned with Circes to inchant, with Calipso to charme, with the Syrens to sing, and all these to breede my destruction: yet at last, thy concealed vices are burst open into manifest abuses. Now is thy lust grown to light, thy whoredomes to bee acted in the Theaters of Venice, thy palpable dissolutions to bee proclaimed

in the Prouinces of Italy; Time is the mother of Trueth, and now hath layde open thy life to the worlde: thou art with Venus, taken in a nette by Vulcan, and though thou hast long gone to the water, yet at last thou art come broken home. I mistrusted this of long, and haue found it out at last, I meane the loues betweene thee, and that Traytor Lucesio, which although I smothered with silence, yet I hid vp for reuenge: I haue seene with griefe, and past ouer with sorrow many odde prankes, thinking still, time would haue altered thy thoughts, but now thou hast spoyled thy belly full, and gotten a Bastard, and wouldest fop me off to bee the Father: no, though I be blinde, I will not swallow such a Flie. For the time of thy quickning, and his fresh acquaintance iumpes in an euen date; this fowre yeare I haue been thy husband, and could not rayse vp thy belly, and Lucesio no sooner grew familiar with thee, but hee got thee with child: and were it not, base strumpet, that I reserue thee to further infamy, I would presently butcher thee, and the brat both with one stab: And with that he flung out of the Chamber, leauing poore Philomela in a great maze, to heare this vnlookt for discourse: insomuch, that after shee had lyen a while in a traunce, comming to her selfe, shee burst forth into abundance of teares, and passed away the night in bitter complaints, whilest Philippo madde with the franticke humour of iealousie, sate in his study, hammering how he might bring both Lucesio and her to confusion; one while he resolued to prouide Gallyes ready for his passage, and then to murther both his wife and Lucesio, and so to flie away into some forrayne Country: Then he determined to accuse them before the Duke his neare kinsman, and haue them openly punished with the extremity of the Law: but hee wanted witnesses to confirme his leasons

alle-

allegations. Being thus in a quandary, at laſt, hee called vp two Genowayes his ſeruants, ſlaues that neyther regarded God, Religion nor Conſcience, and them hee ſuborned with ſweet perſwaſions, and large promiſes, to ſweare, that he and they did take Luteſio and Philomela in an adulterous action, & although the baſe villaines had at all no ſparkes of honeſty in their minds, yet the honour of their Lady, her curteſie, to all her knowne vertues, and ſpeciall good qualities did ſo preuayle, that they were paſſing vnwilling to blemiſh her good name with their periuries; yet at laſt the County cloyde them ſo with the hope of golde, that they gaue free conſent to confirme by oath, whatſoeuer he ſhould plot vowne to them.

Whereupon the next morning the Earle gat him earely to the D. of Venice, who was his Couſin Germaine, and made ſolemne complaint of the diſhonor offered him by his wife and Signior Luteſio: craning iuſtice, that he might haue ſuch a manifeſt iniury redreſſed with the rigour of the Law.

The Duke, whoſe name was Lorenſo Medici, grieued that his Kinſman was vexed with ſuch a croſſe, and ſorrowed, that Philomela, that was ſo famous in Italy for her beauty and vertue, ſhould diſhonour her ſelfe, and her huſband, by yeelding her loue to laſciuious Luteſio, ſwearing a preſent diſpatch of reuenge, and thereupon graunted out warrantes to bring them both preſently before him.

Philippo glad of this, went his way to the houſe of Luteſio well armed, and euery way appointed, as if hee had gone to ſacke the ſtrongeſt holde in all Italy, carrying with him a crue of his friends and familiars, furniſhed at all points to apprehend the guiltleſſe Gentleman; as ſoone as they came to his

house, they found one of his seruants sitting at the doore: Who seeing the Earle, saluted him reuerently, and marueled what the reason should bee, hee was accompanied with such a multitude.

Philippo demaunded of him where his Master was: walking, may it please your Honour, (quoth he) in his Garden. Then sayes the Earle, If he bee no more busie, I will be so bold as to go speake with him, and therefore follow me, sayeth he to the crue, who pressing in after the Earle, encountered Lutesio, comming from his Garden to goe into his Chamber: as soone as he spyed Philippo, with a merry looke, as if his heart had commanded his eyes to bid him welcome, hee saluted the Earle most graciously, but highly was astonished, to see such a troupe at his heeles.

Philippo contrary (as Lutesio offered to imbrace him with his best hand) tooke him fast by the bosome, and pulling forth his poincard, sayd: Traytor, were it not I regard mine honour, and were loth to be blemisht with the bloud of so base a companion, I would rippe out that false heart that hath violated the faith once united betwixt vs: but the extremity of the Law shall reuenge thy villany: and therefore Officers take him into your custody, and carry him presently to the Duke, whither I will bring straight the Strumpet his Paramour, that they may receyue condigne punishment for their haynous and detestable treacheries.

Poore Lutesio, who little lookt for such a greeting of the Earle, wondred whence this bitter speech should grow, so deepely amazed, that hee stoode as a man in a traunce, till at the last, gathering his wits together; hee beganne humbly and fearefully to haue replyed: when the Earle commaunded the Officers to carry him away, and would not heare him vtter any one word.

He

Who speeding him home to his owne house, to fetch his sorrowfull and faultlesse wife, to heare the baleful verdict of her appeached innocency: comming vp into her bed Chamber, he found her sitting by her bed side, on her knées, in most hearty and deuout prayer, that it would please GOD, to cleare her husband from his iealousie, and protect her from any open reproach or slaunder, vttering her Orisons with such heart-breaking sighes, and aboundance of teares, that the base Catchpoles that came in with him, tooke pitty, and did compassionate the extremity of her passions: But Philippo, as if he had participated his nature with the bloud thirsty Caniball, or eaten of the scathin roote, that maketh a man to be as cruell in heart, as it is hard in the rynde, stept to her, and calling her backward, bad her arise strumpet, and hastily make her ready, for the Duke stayed for her comming, and had sent his officers to fetch her.

Perplexed Philomela, casting vp her eye, and séeing such a Crue of Rake-hels, ready to attend vpon him, was so surcharged with griefe, that she fell down in a passion: Philippo let her lie, but the Ministers stept vnto her, and receyued her againe: as sone as shée was come to her selfe, she desired Philippo, that for all the loue of their youth, he would graunt her but onely this one fauour, that she might not be carried before the Duke, with that common attendance, but that shee and he might go together without any further open discredite, and then, if shee could not proue her selfe innocent, let her without fauour, abide the penalty of the Law. Although she craued this bone, with aboundance of teares, yet Philippo would haue no remorse, but compelled her to attire herselfe, and then conuayed her with this crue to the Dukes palace, where there was gathered together all the Consigliadors, and chiefe Magistrates of the City: Her passing thorow

row the ſtreetes, braue a great wonder to the Venetians, what the cauſe of her trouble ſhould be: ſo that infinite number of Citizens followed her, and as many other people as could thruſt into the common Hall, to heare what ſhould bee obiected againſt Philomela.

At laſt, when the Iudges were ſet, and Luteſio, and Philomela, brought to the Barre: the Duke commaunded Philippo to diſcourſe what Articles he had to obiect againſt his wife and Luteſio.

Philippo, with his eyes full of iealouſie, and heart armed with reuenge, looking on them both, fetching a deepe ſigh, beganne thus. It is not vnknowne to the Venetians, (right famous Duke, and honourable Magiſtrates of this ſo worthy a City,) how euer ſince I married this Philomela, I haue yelded her ſuch loue with reuerence, ſuch affection with care, ſuch deuoted fauours with affected dueties, that I did rather honour her as a Saint, then regarde her as a wife: ſo that the Venetians counted me, rather to dote on her extreamely, then to loue her ordinarily; neyther can I deny, mighty Lorenzo, but Philomela returned all theſe my fauours with gentle loues, and obedient amours, being as dutifull a wife, as I was a louing husband, vntill this Traytor Luteſio, this vngratefull Monſter, that liuing, hath drunke of the Riuer Lethe, which maketh men forgetfull of what is paſt: ſo he, obliuious of all honour I did him, was the firſt Actor in this tragicke ouerthrow of the fame of the houſe of Philippo. I appeale to the Venetians, euen from the Magiſtrate, to the meaneſt man, what honourable parts of friendſhippe I haue ſhowne to Luteſio, how hee was my ſecond ſelfe, except Philomela, his boſome was the Cell, wherein I hid vp my ſecrets, his mouth was the Oracle, whereby I directed my actions; as I could not be without his preſence, ſo I neuer would doe any

thing

thing without his counsell: committing thus my selfe, my soule, my goods, mine honour, nay, my wife, to his honour, onely reseruing her from him: of all that I haue priuate to my selfe, the Traytor, (Oh listen to a Tale of ruthe, Venetians) neyther regarding GOD, nor respecting his friend, neyther moued with feare, nor touched with faith, forgetting all friendshippe, became amorously to woo my wife, and at last, dishonestly wanne her: and now of long time, lasciuiously hath vsed her, which I suspected, as little as I trusted, and affected them both deerely.

How long they haue continued in their adulterous loues I know not: but as time hatcheth trueth, and reuealeth the very intralles of hidden secrets, so yesterday, Oh, the balefull day of my dishonour! Lutesio, and my wife, being suspected of too much familiarity by my seruants, though neuer mistrusted by me, were watched by these Genowayes, who seeing them in the Chamber together, shameleſſe as they were, hauing little regarde of any priuy pryers into their actions, fell to these amorous sports, so openly, that through a chinck of the doore, these were eye-witnesses of their adultery, I being then in the Garden, comming vp, and finding these two peeping in at the doore, stole secretly vp, and with these poore slaues, was a beholder of mine owne dishonour; My shame was so greate, and my sorrow so extreame, to see my wife so inconstant, and my friend so false, that I stepped backe againe into the Garden, calling away these Harlets, and leauing them still Agents of these vnkind villanies: when I came into the Garden, such was the loue to Philomela, and so great the friendshippe I bore to Lutesio, that truſt mee, Venetians, had my selfe onely beene a witnesse of their follies, I would haue smothered the fault with silence: but knowing, that such base Rascals would at one time or other be blabbes, and so ble-

blemish mine honour, and so accuse mee for a traitor to my owne wife. I resolued to haue them punished by Law, that haue so peruersly requited my loue: therfore haue I here produced them in open Court, that my dishonours may end in their reuenge, calling for iustice with extremity, against two persons of such treacherous ingratitude.

And here Philippo ceased, driuing all the hearers into a great maze, that the Duke sate astonished, the Configliatori musing, and the common people murmuring at the discourse of Signior Philippo, and bending their enuious eyes against the two Innocents, for wronging so honorable a County.

To be briefe, Lutesio and Philomela were examined, and no doubt, they tolde sundry tales to cleare themselues: but all in vaine, for the oath of the two slaues found them guilty, whereupon a quest of choyce Citizens went vpon them, and both as guilty, condemned to death.

When the fatall sentence should haue bene pronounced against them, Philippo, with a counterfeyte countenance, full of sorrow, kneeling downe, desired, that they might not die, because it would grieue him to be blemisht with the blood of his wife, whom hee had loued, or of his friend whom he had honored: at whose humble intreaty, Iudgement was giuen, that Philippo and Philomela should be diuorced: & he at free liberty to marry whom he list: and Lutesio, for euer to be banished, not onely out of Venice, but of all the Dukedome and Territories of the same.

As soone as sentence was giuen, Lutesio fetcht a great sigh, and laying his hand on his boseme, sayd; This brest, Philippo, did neuer harbour any disloyall thought against thee, nor once imagine, or contriue any dishonour against thy wife. Whatsoeuer thou hast wrongfully auerred, or the Duke hardly conceyued, for

for witnesse, I appeale to none but GOD, who knoweth mee guiltlesse, and to thine owne conscience, whose woune for this wrong, will euer bee restlesse. My banishment I brooke with patience, in that I know time will discouer any truth in my absence: smoake cannot be hidden, nor the wrong of Innocents scape without reuenge. I onely grieue for Philomela, whose chastity is no lesse, then her vertues are many, and her honours as farre from lust, as thou and thy periured slaues from truth: It bootes not vse many wordes, onely this I will say, Men of Venice haue lost a friend, which he will misse, and a wife that hee will sorow for. And so he went out of the Councell-house, home to his owne lodging, hauing the terme of twenty one dayes appointed for his departure.

Philomela, poore soule, knowing what was in record, could not be reuerst: that her credite was crackt, her honour vtterly blemisht, and her name brought in contempt: for all this, abashed not outwardly, whatsoeuer she conceyted inwardly, but seemed in her farre more full of fauour and beauty, then euer shee was before: and her lookes so modest and graue, that Chastity seemed to sitte in her eyes, and to proclaime the wrong was offered vnto her by these periurde persons. With this assured and constant countenance, first looking on the Duke, on the Consiliadori, on the common people, and then on her husband, shee vsed these words.

O Philippo Medici, once the louer of Philomela, though now the wracke of her honours, and the blemish of her high Fortunes, how canst thou looke to heauen, and not tremble? how canst thou beholde mée, and not blush? how canst thou thinke there is a God, without feare? or a hell, without horror? canst thou blinde the diuine Maiesty, as thou hast ledde these Pa-

giſtrates into a falſe opinion of thine owne diſhonour, and my diſhoneſty? Mille teſtes conſcientia: if theſe ſlaues, the Miniſters of thy ielous enuy ſhould grow dumbe, and all the world ſilent, yet will thine owne conſcience dayly cry out in thine eares, that thou haſt wronged Philomela. I am the daughter of a Duke, as thou art the ſonne of an Earle: my vertues in Venice, haue beene as great as thine honours: my fortunes and my friends, more then thine: all theſe will ſearch into this cauſe, and if they finde out mine innocency, thinke Philippo worthy of great pennance.

But in vayne, I vſe charmes to a deafe Adder: therefore I leaue thee to the choyce of a new Loue, and the Fortune of a fayre wife, who, if ſhee proue as honeſtly amorous towards thee, as Philomela, then wrong her not with ſuſpition, as thou haſt done mee with iealouſie: leſt ſhe proue too liberall, and pay my debts.

Yet Philippo, haſt thou loſt more in loſing Lucio, then in forſaking me, for thou mayeſt haue many honeſt wiues, but neuer ſo faithfull a friend: therefore though I bee diuorced, bee thou and hee reconciled, leſt at laſt, the horror of thy conſcience draw thee into deſpaire, and paine thee with too late repentance.

So Philippo, euer wiſhing thee well, I will euer intreat, that neyther God may lay the wrong of mine innocency to thy charge, nor my friends triumph in thy infortunate reuenge, and ſo farewell.

With this, ſhe ſtept forth of the Hall, leauing Philippo greatly tormented in his conſcience, and the Duke, and all the reſt wondring at her patience: ſaying, it was pitty, ſhee was drawne on to wantonneſſe by Lucio.

The

The rumours of this ſpread through all Venice, of the laſciuious life of Philomela; ſome ſayde, all was not golde that gliſtered, that the fayreſt faces haue oft times the falſeſt hearts, and the ſmootheſt lookes, the moſt treacherous thoughts; that as the Agate, bee it neuer ſo white without, yet it is full of blacke ſtrokes within, and that the moſt ſhining Sunne breedeth the moſt ſharpe ſhowres; ſo women, the more chaſtity they profeſſe openly, the leſſe chary they are in ſecret of their honeſty. Others ſayd, it might be a compacted matter by the Earle to be ridde of his wife: ſome ſaide, that the matter might be miſtaken, and made worſe then it was.

Thus diuerſly they did deſcant, while poore Philomela, being gotten to a Gentlemans houſe, a friend of hers, ſate ſorrowfully, reſoluing how ſhee might beſt ſalue this blemiſh; one while ſhe thought to goe home to the Duke her Father, and incenſe him to reuenge: that againe ſhe miſliked, for by open iarres, and ciuill diſcention, were ſhe neuer ſo innocent, yet her name ſhould by ſuch open brawles, grow more infamous: another while, ſhe thought to perſwade Luteſio againſt him, and that hee might procure the ſlaues by torture to bewray the ſubornation of periury, and ſo to bring her husband within the compaſſe of open treachery.

Thus the ſecret loue ſhe bare ſtill to Philippo, would not ſuffice: for ſhe had rather beare guiltles ſhame, then bring her husband to perpetuall infamy.

Thus did ſhee plotte in her mind ſundry wayes of reuenge: but at laſt, this was her reſolution, ſith her honour ſo famous through Italy, was now ſo highly ſtained, ſhe would neyther ſtay in Italy, nor yet returne to her father, but goe into ſome ſtrange country, and there die vnknowne, that being abſent from

the rumour of her bad report, she might liue, though poorely, yet quiet.

Vpon this determination, shee set downe her rest, and gathered all her clothes and Iewels together: for the Earle sent her all, whatsoeuer he had of hers, and she returned him by the messenger a ring with a Diamond, wherein was written these words, Olim meminisse dolebit. The Earle tooke it, and put it on his finger, which after bred his further misery.

But leauing him a contented man, though with a troubled conscience: for the satisfying of his iealous reuenge.

Againe, to Philomela, who hauing packt vp all her Iewels and treasures, listned for a ship, and heard of one that made to Palermo in Sicilia. As the poor Countesse was careless of her selfe, as a woman halfe in dispaire, so she little regarded to what port of Christendome the barke made, and therefore hired passage in that shippe so secretly, that none but her owne selfe and a Page did know, when or whither she meant to make her voyage: so that on a suddaine, hauing certaine intelligence at what houre the shippe would warpe out of the Hauen, she slipt away, and her Page with her, and getting aboord vnder sayle, committed her selfe to God, the mercy of the Seas, and to the husband of many hard misfortunes.

The Shippe had not gone a League vpon the seas, but Philomela beganne to be sicke; whereupon the Master of the Shippe comming in to comfort her, found her in his eye, one of the fayrest creatures that euer he saw, and though her colour were something pale through her present sickenesse, yet hee could compare it to no worse shew then the glister of the Moone in a silent night, and a cleare skie, so that the poore shippers conscience beganne to be prickt, and loue beganne to shake

shake him by the sleeue, that he sate downe by her, and after his blunt fashion, gaue her such sweet comfort as such a swayne could afford.

Philomela thanked him, and told him, it was nothing but a passion, that the roughnesse of the seas had wrought in her, who heretofore was vnacquainted with any other waters then the riuer Po, and such small creekes as watered Italy.

Herevpon the Master departed, but with a Flea in his eare, and loue in his eye; for hee had almost forgot his Compasse, hee was so farre out of compasse, with thinking how to compasse Philomela. In this amorous humour, hee beganne to visite often the Cabin wherein Philomela lay, which was a meanes rather to encrease his fury, then to qualifie the fire of loue that beganne to heate him: for, as he that playeth with a Bee, may sooner feele her sting, then taste of her honey: so he that acquainteth himselfe with loue, may more easily repent him then content him, and sooner intrall himselfe in a Labyrinth, then gette an houre of quiet liberty. So it fell out with Tebaldo, for so was the Master of the shippe called: for he by conuersing priuately and familiarly with Philomela, became so farre in loue, that he helde no happinesse like the obtayning of this loue: hee noted the excellencie of her beauty, the exquisitenesse of her qualities, and measured euery part with such precise iudgement, that the small heate of desire grew to a glowing fire of affection. But for all this, hee durst not reueale his mind vnto her, lest happily by his motion, shee should bee moued vnto displeasure. But as by time, small sparks grow into great flames: so at last, hee waxed so passionate, that there was no way with him but death or despaire, if he did not manifest his thoughts vnto her: resoluing, thus dannably with himselfe, that howsoeuer loue or

fortune dealt with him, hée would haue his mind satisfied: for if shee graunted, then hée would keepe her in Palermo, as his Paramour; if shée denyed, seeing hee had her within the compasse of his Barke, hee would haue his purpose by force, and so becom Lord of his content by conquest.

Thus resolute, he went towards the cabin of Philomela, to bewray his affection vnto her, when drawing neare the doore, he heard her playing most cunningly vpon a Lute, certaine Lessons of curious descant; staying awhile, lest he might interrupt so sweete Musicke: at last, she left off, and fel from her Lute, to this lamentable complaint.

Oh poore woman, worthy so tearmed, being brought to thy woe by a man; now doest thou see, that as such as are stung by the Tarentula, are best cured by Musicke: so such minds as are vexed by sorrow, finde no better reliefe then a sweet relish of comforting melody.

Ah Abstemia, for so she now called her name, the more to disguise her selfe: if Musicke should bee answerable to thy Martyrdome, or the excellency of descant comfortable to the intent of the distresse: then must Apollo be fetcht from heauen, Orpheus from his graue, Amphion from his rest, the Syrens from their rocks, to qualifie thy musings with their musickes: for though they excell in degrees of sounds, thou exceedest in diuersities of sorrowes, being farre more miserable then musicall: and yet they, the rarest of all others: once Abstemia, thou was counted the fayrest in all Italy, and now, thou art holden the falsest: thy vertues were thought many, now thy dishonours are counted numberlesse: thou wert the glory of thy parents, the hope of thy friends, the fame of thy Country, the wonder of thy time for modesty, the paragon of Italy for honourable grace, and the pattern whereby women did measure their perfections: for she

that

that was holden leſſe modeſt, was counted a wanton: and ſhee that would ſeeme more vertuous, was eſteemed too preciſe: but now thou art valued worth leſſe of all thy former honours, by the ſtaine of one vndeſerued blemiſh.

Ah, had I beene falſe to my husband, perhaps I had beene more fortunate, though not in mine owne conſcience, yet to the eyes of the world leſſe ſuſpected, and ſo not detected: but innocency, to God is the ſweeteſt incense, and a conſcience without guilt, is a ſacrifice of the pureſt ſauour. What, though I be blamed: if my life be lent me, my honour will be recouered; for, as God will not ſuffer a murther to eſcape without puniſhment: ſo he will not let the wrong of the innocent go to his graue without reuenge. Though thou be baniſhed, Abſtemia, yet comfort thy ſelfe, account each Country thine owne, and euery honeſt man thy neighbour: let thy life bee meane, ſo ſhalt thou not bee lookt into: for enuie creepeth not ſo low as Cottages: reedes bend with the wind, when Cedars fall with a blaſt: poore men rely lightly of Fortune, becauſe they are too weake for Fortune, when higher ſtates feele her force, becauſe they noſſe in her boſome: acquaint not thy ſelfe with many, leſt thou fall into the hands of flatterers, for the popular ſorts haue more eyes and longer tongues then the rich: ſeeme courteous to all, but conuerſe with few: and let thy vertues bee much ſpoken, though thy ſelfe liue neuer ſo priuate. Hold honeſty more dear then thy life, and be thou neuer ſo poore, yet be chaſt, and chuſe rather to ſtarue in the ſtreetes, then liue daintily at a Leachers Table: if as thou art beautifull, Abſtemia, any fall in loue with thy fauours, and what hee cannot winne by ſuites, will ſeeke to get by force, ſo rauiſh thee of thy richeſt glory: chuſe rather to bee without breath, then liue with ſuch a blemiſh. Thou art friendleſſe

leſſe in Sicilia. and though thou complaineſt, thou ſhalt not be heard: might ouercomes right, and the weakeſt are ſtill thruſt to the wall.

To preuent therefore conſtraint in loue in the greateſt Prince: I haue prouided (quoth ſhe) a poyſon in the ſeale of my ring, as deadly as it is little, reſoluing as ſtoutely as Hanibal did, who held the like in the pomell of his ſword, and choſe rather to die free, then fall into the hands of Scipio. So, before any Leacher ſhall force me to ſatiſfie his paſſion, I will end my life with this fatall poyſon. So Abſtenia, ſhalt thou die more honourably, which is more deare then to liue diſgraced: inough is a feaſt, poore wench, what needes theſe ſolemne preachings? Leaue theſe ſecret dumps, and fall to thy Lute, for thou ſhalt haue time enough to thinke of ſorrow: and with that ſhee tuned her ſtrings, and in a merry veine played three or foure pleaſant Leſſons, and at laſt ſung to her ſelfe this conceyted Ditty.

AN

AN ODE.

WHat is loue once diſgraced?
But a wanton thought ill placed,
Which doth blemiſh whom it payneth,
And diſhonours whom it daineth,
Seene in higher powers moſt,
Though ſome fooles doe fondly boſt,
That who ſo is high of kin,
Sanctifies his louers ſinne.
Ioue could not hide *Ios* ſcape,
Nor conceale *Caliſtos* rape.
Both did fault, and both were framed,
Light of loues, whom luſt had ſhamed.
Let not women truſt to men,
They can flatter now and then.
And tell them many wanton tales,
Which doe breed their after bales.
Sinne in Kings, is ſinne wee ſee,
And greater ſinne, cauſe great of gree.
Maius peccatum, this I reed,
If he be high that doth the deed.
Mars for all his Deity,
Could not *Venus* dignifie,
But *Vulcan* trapt her, and her blame
Was puniſht with an open ſhame.
All the Gods laught them to ſcorne,

For dubbing *Vulcan* with the horne.
Whereon may a woman boſt,
If her chaſtity be loſt.
Shame awaitt'h vpon her face,
Bluſhing cheekes and foule diſgrace,
Report will blab, this is ſhe
That with her luſt wins infamy.
If luſting loue be ſo diſgrac't,
Die before you liue vnchaſt:
For better die with honeſt fame,
Then lead a wanton life with ſhame.

As ſoone as Philomela had ended her Ditty, ſhee laide downe her Lute, and fell to her booke; but Tebaldo hauing heard all her ſecret meditation, was driuen into ſuch a maze, with the concept of her incomparable excellency, that he ſtood as much aſtoniſhed to heare her chaſte ſpeeches, as Acteon to ſee Dianas naked beauties: entring with a piercing inſight into her vertues, and perceyuing ſhee was ſome greater perſonage then he at the firſt tooke her for; his loue was ſo quayled with the rareneſſe of her qualities, that hee rather indeuoured to honour her as a Saint, then to loue her as a Paramour: deſire now began to change to reuerence, and affection to an honeſt deuotion, that hee ſhamed he once thought any way luſt towards ſo vertuous a creature.

Thus metamorphoſed, he ſtept into her Cabin, and found her reading, to whom he did ſhew more then accuſtomed reuerence: which Philomela returned with equall courteſie.

At laſt, he tolde her, how he had heard her lamentable diſcourſe of her miſfortune, and the honourable reſolution of her honeſty, which did ſo tie him to bee deuoted

noted towards her, that if when she came into Palermo, his poore house might serue her for a lodging, it and all therein, with himselfe and his wife, should be at her commaund.

Philomela thanked him hartily for his kind and courteous proffer, and promised to her ability, not to be vngratefull.

Well, leauing her vnder sayle towards Palermo: to Signior Giouanni Lutesio, who harbouring a hatefull intent of reuenge in his mind against the County Philippo, thought to pay him home pat in his lappe, and therefore making as speedy a dispatch as might be, of his affayres, he takes his iourney from Venice towards the Duke of Millaines Court, the Father of Philomela, to whom hee had recounted what had happned to his Daughter, what had chanced to him, and how great dishonour was offered to him by her husband.

The Duke, although these newes touched him at the quicke, yet dissembled the matter, and began in great choller to vpbrayd Lutesio, that no doubt the Earle did it vpon iust cause, or els neyther would he haue wronged a wife whom so tenderly he loued, neither reiected a friend whom he so dearely honoured, nor yet the Duke and Senate of Venice would haue yeelded so peremptory and hard a sentence, as eyther banishment to him, or diuorce to her.

To this Lutesio made reply, that the Earle, to proue his surmised Articles true, had suborned slaues, that were Genowayes, to periure themselues.

Hée shewed the Duke the Letters that past betweéne him and his Daughter, and the reason why he wrote them: but all this could not satisfie the Dukes opinion, but he charged his Gentlemen to lay

hands on Lutesio, and to carry him to prison, vntill he had further triall of the matter, sweating, if he found him to haue played false with his Daughter, neyther should his banishment excuse him, nor her diuorce: for he would haue both their liues, for offering dishonor to the house of Millaine.

Vpon this censure of the Duke, Lutesio was carried to prison, and the Duke left mightily perplexed; who beganne to cast in his mind many doubts of this strange chance, vowing in his heart a fatall reuenge vpon Philippo, for blemishing his daughters honour with such open infamy.

When thus the Duke was in a heauy suspition, one of the Genowayes, whose conscience tormented him, ranne away from Venice, and came to Millaine: where comming to the Dukes Palace, he desired to speake with his Grace from the County Philippo: being brought straight vnto him; as soone as he came into his presence, he kneeled downe, trembling, and besought him for mercy.

The Duke astonished at the strange terror of the man, demanded of him what he was, and from whence he came.

The slaue told him that he was borne at Genowa, and had been seruant to that infortunate Earle, the County Philippo Medici, and one of those periured Traytors, that had borne false witnesse against his Daughter Philomela.

At this the Duke started out of his seat, and taking the fellow courteously vp, bade him not feare nor doubt; for if he spake nothing but the truth, he should not onely be freely pardoned, but highly rewarded.

Vpon this the poore slaue discourst from point to point: First, the singular chastity of his Lady and Mistresse, and then the deepe iealousie of Philippo, who first,

firſt, as he had learned, cauſed his deare friend Signior Giouanni Luteſio, to try her, who finding her wiſe, vertuous and conſtant, fell out with the Earle, that he would wrong his wife with ſuch cauſeleſſe ſuſpition.

After, he rehearſed, how the County grew iealous, that Philomela fauoured Luteſio, and becauſe hee had no proofe to confirm his miſtruſt, but his own doubting head, he ſuborned him, and a fellow of his to ſweare, that they ſaw Luteſio and the Counteſſe euen in the very Act of adultery, which in them was periury, and in him Leachery: for both the Gentleman and their Lady was innocent: and with that, falling downe on his knees, and melting into teares, he craued pardon of his life.

The Duke, whoſe eyes were full of fire, as ſparkling reuenge and hate, bade him bee of good cheare, and pulling his purſe out of his pocket, gaue it to him for an earneſt penny of further friendſhippe, and charged his Gentlemen to giue the Genoway good entertainement: And with that ſent for Signior Luteſio out of priſon; and ſorrowfull, that hee had wronged him ſo much, told him how one of the Genowais was come, that gaue falſe witneſſe againſt his daughter, & had reuealed all: which ioyed Luteſio at the very heart; ſo that humbly and with watery chekes, he deſired the Duke to reuenge his daughters wrongs; but as little booted his intreaty, as ſpurres to a ſwift horſe.

For, the Duke gathering a mighty Army, made as much ſpeede as might bee towards Venice, intending to quit the wrong proffered to Philomela by ſuſpitious Philippo, who then liued in all deſired content, in that his iealous humour was ſatisfied: was determining where to make a new choyſe for fauour:

when there came this change of Fortune, that newes was brought into Venice, that not onely the Villaine Duke was come down, to waste and spoyle the Cities belonging vnto the Signiory of Venice, but also meant to gather all the forces of his friends in Chri-stendome, to reuenge the abuse offered to his daughter Philomela.

This newes being come vnto the eares of Philippo, made him forget his woing, and beginne to wonder, how hee should shift off the misfortune ready to light vpon him, if any thing were proued of his suborning treachery; he now beganne to enter into consideration with himselfe, that if Lutesio were gotten to Villaine, he would not onely lay the plotte of all mischiefe against him, but also discouer his treason, and incense the Duke to reuenge: and vpon this, he thought grew the occasion of his men in Armes: then did hee feare, lest the Genowaie that was runne away from him, should come to the Dukes Court, and there confirme by authenticall proofe, what Lutesio vpon his honour did affirme.

Thus diuerslie perplexed, hee remayned in great dumpes, while the Duke and Consiliadory of Venice, gathering into their Senate-house, beganne to consult, what reason the Villanians had to inuade their territories. And therefore to be fully satisfied in the cause, they sent Ambassadors, to inquire the reason why hee rose in Armes against them: whether it were for the sentence offered against Philomela, or no: and if it were, that he should herein rest satisfied, that as shee was exiled by Law, so she was iustly condemned for leachery.

The Ambassadors hauing their charge, came to the Duke, lying then not farre off from Bergamo, and did their message vnto him, which he answered thus:

thus: that hee was not come as an enemy against them, but as a priuate foe to Philippo, and therefore required to approue his Daughters innocency, not by Armes, but by witnesses in the Senate house of Venice: and if shee were found guiltlesse, to haue condigne punishment enioyned and executed against Philippo.

This, if they did deny, hee was come with his own blade, and his Souldiours, to plague the Venetians for the partiall iudgements of their Magistrates: and if they meant to haue him come into Venice, he craued for his assurance sufficient hostages.

The Ambassadors returned with this answere to the Duke and the Consiliadory, who held his request passing reasonable, and thought it would be dishonor to them and their estate, if they should stand in denyall of so equall a demaund: and therefore the Duke not onely sent him his onely sonne, but fiue young sonnes more, all the Sonnes of men of honour for hostage.

Vpon whose arriuall, the Duke of Millayne, onely accompanied with Lutesio, the Genowayes, and tenne other noble men, went to the City, and was magnificently intertayned by the Duke and the Citizens: where feasting that day, the next morning they resolued to méete in the Senate house, to heare what could be alleadged against Philippo, whom they cited peremptorily to appeare, to answere to such obiections as should be layd against him.

The guilty Earle now beganne to féele remorse of conscience, and to doubt of the issue of his treachery: and therefore getting into his Closet, hée called the Genowaie to him, and there beganne to perswade him, that although both Signior Lutesio and his fellow did betray the subornation of periury, yet hée

should

ſhould deny it vnto the death, and for his reward, hee bade him take halfe his Treaſure and his freedome.

The Genoway made ſolemne proteſtation, that he would performe no leſſe then hee commaunded him: and thereupon as an aſſumpſit, toke the Signet of the Earle, for performance of all couenants.

Thus armed, as he thought, in that hee reſted ſafely in the ſecreſie of his ſlaue. The next day he appeared in the Senate houſe, whither the Dukes of Millaine and of Venice came, with all the Conſiliadiory and chiefe Citizens of the town, to heare how the matter ſhould be debated.

At laſt, the Duke of Millayne aroſe amongſt them all, and beganne thus to diſcourſe. I come not, Venetians, to inlarge my Territories with the ſword, though I haue burthened your Borders with the waight of armed men: I riſe not in armes, to ſeeke martiall honours, but ciuill iuſtice: not to clayme other mens right, but mine owne due, which is reuenge vpon falſe Philippo, for his treachery againſt my innocent daughter Philomela: Innocent, I tearme her, though iniury hath wronged her; and yet I accuſe not your Duke or Conſiliadiory of iniuſtice, becauſe their cenſure paſt according to the falſe euidence propounded by periured Philippo: But I clayme iuſtice without partiality againſt him, which if it be graunted, I ſhall highly prayſe your Senate, and bee euer profeſt your friend: If it be denyed, I am come in Armes to defend my Daughters innocency, and with my bloud to paint reuenge vpon the gates of Venice.

If I ſpeake ſharpely, blame me not, ſith mine honor is toucht with ſuch a blemiſh; the diſcredite of the daughter, is a ſpot in the parents brow, and therefore if I ſeeke to excuſe her, accuſe not me; I do but what

honour

honour commaunds, and nature binds me to.

For proofe, that I come not to sanctifie sinne in my Daughter, or shadow her scapes with my countenance, I haue brought here not onely Lutesio, but one of their slaues, which was by Philippo induced to giue false euidence, to affirme as much as I auerre: therefore I onely craue they may be examined with equity, and I be satisfied onely in iustice.

Thus with his face full of wrath, hee sate downe silent: when the Consiliadory amazed at this briefe and sharpe speech of the Millanois, beganne to examine the Genoway, who confest all the treachery: they hearing this, demaunded of Philippo, how hée could answere the confession of his Slaue: he smiling, made this scornefull reply.

I hope, worthy Duke, and honourable Senate of Venice, you will not bee daszled out of countenance with the sight of weapons, nor bée driuen from iustice by the noyse of armour, that though I bée an Earle, and am not able to equall the Duke of Millayne in multitudes, yet I shall haue as high fauours as he with equity: in hope whereof, I answere, that I thinke there is none so simple here, but sées how Lutesio constrayned through enuy, and the Duke compelled by nature, haue suborned this poore slaue, eyther by golde or promises to recant, what before by solemne oath he here protested.

Hée to recouer his former credite, and liberty in his Country: this, to saue the blemish of his daughters honour: but as such slaues minds are to bee wrought like ware with euery sayre word: so I assure my selfe, little beliefe shall be giuen to such a base and seruile person, that commeth to depose against his owne conscience: this was partner with him in his euidence, (poynting to the other Genoway;) and this can af-

affirme what I testifie, and therefore I appeale to your equities: for by the verdict of this slaue, will I be tride.

At this, the Duke of Venice called the Genoway forth, and bade him speake his minde.

Then Lutefio rising vppe, charged him, that as hée was a Christian, and hoped to bee saued by his merites, he should impartially pronounce what hee knew.

At this, the Genoway feeling a horror, a second hell in his conscience, trembling as a man amazed, and toucht with the sting of Gods iudgements in his heart, stood awhile mute, but at last, gathering his spirites together, and getting the liberty of his speech, falling downe vpon his knées, with his eyes full of teares, hee confest and discourst the whole circumstance of the Earles villany, intended against Philomela; whereat, there was a great shout in the Senate house, and clapping of hands amongst the common people, they all for ioy, crying, Philomela, innocent Philomela.

At this, the Senators sate silent, and the Duke of Millayne vext: and the County Philippo now feeling a dreadfull remorse in his conscience, vttered these words with great resolution.

Now doe I proue that true by experience, which earst I held onely for a bare Prouerbe, that trueth is the daughter of time: and there is nothing so secret, but the date of many dayes will reueale it: that as oyle, though it be mayst, quencheth not fire: so time, though neuer so long, is no sure couert for sinne: but as a sparke rakte vp in Cynders, will at last beginne to glow, and manifest a flame: so treachery, hidden in silence, will burst forth, and cry for reuenge.

Whatsoeuer villany the heart doth worke, in pro-

cesse

ceſſe of time, the woꝛme of conſcience will bewꝛay. Oh Senatoꝛs, this may be applyed to my ſelf, whoſe iealous head compaſſed this treaſon to Philomela, and this treachery to Luteſio, the one, a moſt honeſt wife, the other, a moſt faithfull friend.

It booteth little by circumſtance to diſcouer the ſoꝛrow I conceiue, oꝛ little neede I ſhew my wiues innocency, when theſe baſe ſlaues, whom I ſuboꝛned to periure themſelues, haue pꝛoclaimed her chaſtity, and my diſhonour: ſuffice it then, that I repent, though too late, and would make amends, but I haue ſinned beyond ſatiſfaction, foꝛ there is no ſufficient recompence foꝛ vniuſt ſlander.

Theꝛefoꝛe in penalty of my periury towards Philomela, I craue my ſelfe iuſtice againſt my ſelfe, that you would enioyne a penance, but no leſſe then the extremity of death.

At theſe woꝛds of *Philippo*, the people murmured, and the Senate ſate awhile conſulting with themſelues, what were beſt to doo; at laſt, they referred it to the Duke of Millayne, to giue ſentence and cenſure againſt *Philippo*, ſeeing the woꝛng was his daughters, and the diſhonour his: who being a man of a milde nature, and full of royall honour in his thoughts; riſing vp, with a countenance diſcouering a kind of ſatiſfaction, by the ſubmiſſe repentance of Philippo, pꝛonounſt that the Earle ſhould abide that penalty was enioyned to his daughter, which was, that he ſhould bee baniſhed; that both the Genowayes ſhould haue their liberty, and a thouſand Ducats a peece: and that Luteſio ſhould haue his iudgement reuerſt, and bee reſtoꝛed to his foꝛmer freedome.

At this cenſure of the Duke, they all gaue a generall applauſe, and *Philippo*, there with teares in his eyes, tooke leaue, pꝛotelling, to ſpend his exile

contentedly in seeking out of Philomela, and when hee had found her, then in her presence to sacrifice his bloud as a satisfaction for his Lechery.

Lutesio like wise swore to make a quest for her, and so did the Genowaies, and the Duke her father was as forward; and the Senate broke vp, and the Duke of Millain forthwith departed home to his owne country. Where weele leaue him going homward, and Philippo, Lutesio, and the Genowayes seeking for Philomela.

Once againe to the innocent Lady, who being arriued in Palermo, was not onely courteously intertayned of the Master of the Shippe, but also of his wife: who noting her modesty, vertue, silence, and other good properties, and rare qualities, was so farre in loue with her, that shee would not by any meanes let her depart out of her house, but with a sympathie of sweet affections, did loue like two sisters, insomuch, that Philomela was brought to bedde, and had a young Sonne, called Infortunatus, because hee was borne in the extremity of his Mothers misery: The Master of the Shippe, and his wife being pledges of his Christendome.

Liuing thus obscure, and yet famous in Palermo for her vertues, she found that of all musicke, the meane was the merriest, that quiet rested in low thoughts, and the safest content in the poorest Cottages: that the highest trées abide the sharpest stormes, and the greatest Personages the sorest frownes of Fortune: therefore with patience she brookt her homely course of life, and had more quiet sleepes now in the Shippe-masters house in Palermo, then shee had in her Palace in Venice; onely her discontent was, when she thought on Philippo, that he had proued so vnkind: and on Lutesio, that for her sake, hee was so deepely iniuried: yet as well as shee might, shee saued theselues,

and

and couered her hard fortunes with the shadow of her innocency.

While thus shee liued honourably in Palermo, noted for her excellent behauiour and good quality: It fortuned that the Duke of Millayne and Lucesio, both disguised like two Palmers, had passed through many places to seeke Philomela, and to reduce her from banishment, and at last arriued in Palermo, intending to soiourne there for a while, and then to passe vp to Samagossa, and so through all Sicilia, to haue intelligence of the distressed Countesse.

While thus they stayed, inquiring diligently of her, and not hearing any newes, sith shee was seldome seen abroad, and beside that her name changed, and called Abstemia.

It chaunced that eyther by fortune or destiny, there arriued at the same time in Palermo, the Countie Philippo Medici, who hauing trauelled through diuers countries to finde out his innocent Countesse, wearied at last, not so much with trauell, as with the gnawing worme of a guilty conscience that still tormented him: hee beganne more and more to enter into despayre, and to thinke his life lothsome vnto him, wishing daily for death, so it might not come through the guilt of his owne hand, and yet resoluing, rather to be the murtherer of himselfe, then thus to linger out his dayes in despaire.

In this perplexed passion, hee gate himselfe into a thicke groue, there the better to communicate in his melancholy, vowing, if he heard not of Philomela in that City, to make that groue the monument of his graue.

Thus desirous of death, or of the recouery of his wife; It fortuned that Arnoldo Srozzo, Sonne and Heyre to the Duke of Palermo, being in loue with a young Gentlewoman, whose lodging was distant some three

leagues from the City, pricked forward by the extremity of affection, thought to goe visite her, although hee was not onely forbidden by his Father, but watched, lest privily hee might steale vnto her: yet as loue can finde starting holes, he deuised this policy: he carried a slaue that remayned in his Fathers house abroad to the Groue with him, where Philippo lay lurking, and there changing apparrell with him, hee got him to his desired Mistresse, and bade the slaue returne couertly into the City, and meete him the next day at the same place. Parting thus, as he was going homeward, he was mette by a young Sicilian Gentleman, named Petro Salino, who bearing a mortall grudge to the Dukes Sonne, in that hee affected the Gentlewoman, whom he so tenderly loued: Seeing him alone, and thinking him to be Arnoldo Strozza by his apparrell, and deeming hee came now from his beloued Mistresse, set vpon him, and slew him: and with his Rapier so mangled his face, that by no means he could be discerned, and thereupon fled.

Arnoldos Page missing his Maister, seeking abroad for him in the fields, for that he desired ofttimes to bee solitary, light vpon the dead body of the Slaue, and iudging it to bee his Maister, because hee was in his apparrell, cryed out, and ranne home, and carried newes thereof to the Duke his Father: who, as a man distraught of his wits, commanded straight search to be made, to finde out the actor of the Tragedy, causing the dead corpes to be conuayed with much griefe & many teares.

All the Courtiers, Gentlemen and others, sought abroad to seeke out the Author of this murther: and not farre off where the slaue was slaine, found Philippo walking vp and downe vntrust, his hatte laying by him, and his Rapier in his hand.

The Courtiers seeing a man thus suspitious, made inquiry what hee was: Why quoth the County, I am the man you looke for. Art thou then sayd the Cousin of Arnoldo, that bloudy Traytour that hast slayne the Dukes sonne?

The County glad hee had so sweet an occasion to be ridde of his life, resolute and briefly sayde; I marry am I, and I will kill his Father too, if euer I reach him.

With that they layde holde vpon him, and carried him to prison; and as hee went by the way, they examined him what hee was, but by no meanes hee would reueale vnto them: onely he sayd, he was an Italian, purposely come from Venice to act it.

Newes straight was carried to the Duke, that the murtherer was taken, who was highly glad thereof, and resolued the next day, with the States of the Country, to sit in iudgement.

As fame and report cannot bee silent, so it was straight noysed abroad through Palermo, that the Dukes sonne was slayn by a Venetian, and how he was taken, and should the next day bee arraigned and executed.

Philomela hearing that he was a Venetian that had done the deed, desirous to see him, tooke the Master of the shippes wife with her, and went to the prison, and there by fauour of the Jaylor, saw him through a Window: As sone as Philomela had a view of him, she saw it was Philippo Medici her husband disguised, and hauing in his face the very signes of despaire.

This sight of her husband droue her into a maze, yet to conceale the matter to her selfe, she sayd she knew not the man.

As thus shee was standing talking with the Jaylor, there came a Venetian that was resident in Palermo, and

and desired, that hee might see the Gentleman that had done the murther: but the Jaylor would not suffer him, but inquired what Countryman hee was: he answered, a Venetian, and that is the reason, quoth hee, that I am desirous to haue a sight of him.

Philomela hearing that hee was a Venetian, asked him what newes from Venice.

The Sayler, for so he was, discoursed vnto her, what late had chanced: and amongst the rest, he discouered the fortunes of Philomela, and how shee was wrongfully accused by her husband the Earle, how her Father came to Venice, and hauing her accusers, two slaues examined, they confest, the Earle suborned them to the periury, whereupon Philippo was banished: and now, as a man in despayre, sought about to finde out his wife.

Philomela hearing these newes, thanking him, tooke her leaue of the Sayler, and went home, where getting alone into her Chamber, shee beganne thus to meditate with her selfe.

Now Philomela, thou mayest see, Heauens are iust, and GOD impartiall, that though he deferres, he doeth not acquit: that though he suffer the Innocent to bee wronged, yet at last hee persecuteth the malicious with reuenge: that Time hatcheth Trueth, and that true honour may be blemisht with enuy, but neuer vterly defaced with extremity: now is thy life layde open in Venice, and thy Fame reuiued in spight of Fortune: now mayest thou triumph in the fall of thy iealous husband, and write thy chastity in the Characters of his blood; so shall he die disgraced, and thou returne to Venice as a wonder. Now, shall thy eyes see his end, that hath sought to ruinate thee, and thou liue content and satisfied in the iust reuenge of a periured husband.

Oh

Oh Philomela, that word husband is a high tearm, easily pronounced in the mouth, but neuer to be banished from the heart: knowest thou not, that the loue of a wife must not end but by death? that the tearm of marriage is dated in the graue? that wiues should so long loue and obey, as they liue and draw breath? that they should preferre their husbands honour before their owne life, and chuse rather to die then to see him wronged? Why else did Alcest die for Admetus? Why did Portia eate coales for the loue of Brutus, if it were not, that wiues ought to end their liues with their loues?

Truth, Philomela, but Philippo is a Traytor, hee hath imblemisht thy fame, sought to ruine thine honour, aymd at thy life, condemned thee both to diuorce and banishment, and lastly, hath staynde the high honours of thy Fathers house.

And what of all this, Philomela? hath not euery man his fault? Is there any offence so great, that may not be forgiuen? Philippo did not wrong thee this wrong because he loued som other, but because he ouerloued thee; 'twas iealousie, not lasciuiousnes that forst him to that folly: and suspition is incident onely to such as are kind hearted louers.

Hath not God reuenged thy iniury, and thy father punisht him with the like penalty that thy selfe doest suffer? and wilt thou now glory in his misery? No (Philomela) shew thy selfe vertuous, as ere thou hast beene honourable, and heape coales on his head, by shewing him fauour in extremity. If he hath slain the Dukes sonne, it is through despaire: and if he had not come hither to seeke thee, he had not fallen into this misfortune.

The Palme-tree, the more it is prest downe, the more sprowteth vp: the Camomill, the more it is tra-

ven, the ſweeter ſmell it yeeldeth: euen ſo ought a good wife to be kind to her husband, midſt his greateſt diſcourteſies, and rather to venter her life, then ſuffer him incurre any preiudice, and ſo will I doe by Philippo: for rather then he ſhall die in the ſight of Philomela, I will iuſtifie him with mine own death, ſo ſhall my end be honourable, as my life hath been wonderfull.

With this ſhee ceaſed, and went to her reſt, till the next day morning, that the Dukes and the States gathered together to ſit in iudgement: whither came Lucſio, and the Duke of Millayne diſguiſed, to ſee what hee was, that being a Venetian committed the murther, and there alſo was Philomela, and the Saylers wife.

At laſt the County Philippo was brought forth, whom, when the Duke of Millayne ſaw, iogging Lucſio with his hand, he whiſpered, and ſayd, See Lucſio, where man ſauours, yet God doth in extremity reuenge: now ſhall we ſee the fall of our enemy, yet not touched with his blood: whiſpering thus amongſt themſelues.

At laſt the Duke of Palermo beganne to examine him, if hee were he that ſlew his ſonne, hee anſwered, that hee was the man, and would with his blood anſwere it: what moued you ſayes the Duke, to doe the murther? an olde grudge, quoth hee, that hath beene betweene him and me, euer ſince hee was in Venice, and for that cauſe, reuenge was ſo reſtles in my mind, that I am come from thence, purpoſely to act this Tragedy, and am not ſorry that I haue contented my thoughts with his blood.

At this his manifeſt confeſſion, the Duke ful of wrath, aroſe and ſayd, It was bootles further to impannell any Iury, and therfore vpon his words he would pronounce ſen-

ſentence againſt him. Then Philomela calling to the Duke, and deſiring ſhe might be heard, beganne thus to plead.

O mighty Duke ſtay the cenſure, leſt thy verdict wrong the innocent, and thou condemne an Earle through his owne deſpayring euidence: I ſée, and with trembling I féele, that a guilty conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes. That as it is impoſſible to couer the light of the Sunne with a curtaine: ſo the remorſe of murther cannot be concealed in the cloſet of the moſt ſecret conſpirator.

For, ſtanding by, and hearing thee ready to pronounce ſentence againſt the innocent, I, euen I, that committed the déed, though to the exigent of mine owne death: could not but burſt forth into theſe exclamations to ſaue the ſackleſſe: Know therefore, that hee which ſtandeth here before the Iudgement Seate, is an Earle, though baniſhed: his name is County *Philippo* Medici, my huſband, and once famous in Italy, though here he be blemiſht by fortune: At this, all the company lookt vpon her.

Philippo, as a man amazed, ſtood ſtaring on her face, the teares trickling down his cheekes, to ſee the kindnes of his wife, whom ſo deepely he had iniured: and the Duke of Pillayne her father, with Lutefio, were in as great a wonder.

Laſt, ſhe proſecuted her purpoſe thus: It were too long, worthy Sicilians, to rehearſe the wrongs this *Philippo* hath vſed againſt mee diſtreſſed Countéſſe, through his extreame iealouſie, onely let this briefly ſuffice, hée ſuborned his ſlaues to ſweare, I was ſeene in the act of Adultery: they were believed, I diuorced and baniſhed: and here euer ſince I haue liued in contented patience. But ſince my exile, Time that is the reuealer of Truth, hath made the ſlaues bewray

the effect of the matter, ſo that this preſent Earle is found guilty, my honour ſaued, he baniſhed, and now extreamely diſtreſſed.

Conſider then, Sicilians, if this County my huſband hath offered me ſuch wrong, what reaſon had I to pleade for his life: were it not the guilt of mine own conſcience, forceth me to ſaue the innocent: who, in a deſpayring humour, weary of his life, confeſſeth himſelfe Author of that murther, which theſe hands did execute.

I am the woman, the infortunate Countelle (Sicilians) who, ſuborned by a Sicilian Gentleman, whom, by no tortures I will name, firſt practiſed by witchcraft Arnoldos death: but ſeeing that would not preuayle, I ſought to meet him alone, which I did yeſterday by the Groue, and there offering him an humble ſupplication, and he ſtouping to take it courteouſly, I ſtabd him, and after mangled him in that ſort you found him.

This is truth, this is my conſcience, and this I am by God inforced to confeſſe. Then, worthy Duke, ſaue the innocent Earle, and pronounce ſentence againſt me the offender.

I ſpeake not this, in that I loue the County, but that I am forſt vnto it, by the remorſe of mine owne conſcience.

Here ſhee ended, and all they ſtood amazed, and Philippo beganne againe to reply againſt her, that ſhe did it to ſaue him: but in vaine were his words, for ſhee vſed ſuch probable reaſons againſt her ſelfe, that the Duke was ready to pronounce ſentence againſt her, and the Duke her father at the point to bewray himſelf, had it not beene that Arnoldo Strozzo the Dukes ſon, comming home, and meeting certaine playne Country-men, heard this newes, how the Duke was ſitting in

iudge,

iudgement againſt one that had murdered his ſonne, which newes as it drone him into a wonder, ſo it made him haſte ſpedily to the place, to know the effect of the matter: and he came thither iuſt at the beginning of Philomelaes oration.

Seeing therefore two pleading thus for death, hee himſelfe being aliue, and his father ready to condemne the innocent: hee commaunded the company to giue way, came and ſhewed himſelfe, and ſayd, May it pleaſe your Grace, I am here, whom theſe confeſſe they haue ſlaine.

At this, the Duke ſtart vppe, and all the ſtanders by were in a maze. At laſt, to driue them out of their dumps, hée tolde them that hee thought, that the man that was murthered, and taken for him, was a ſlaue, with whom, the day before hee had changed apparrell.

The Duke, for ioy to ſee his ſon, was a great while mute: At laſt hee beganne to examine the matter, why theſe two did pleade themſelues guilty. Philippo anſwered, for deſpaire, as weary of his life. Philomela ſaid, for the ſafety of her husband, chooſing rather to die, then he any wayes ſhould ſuffer preiudice.

The Sicilians at this, looking Philomela in the face, ſhowted at her wondrous vertues, and Philippo in a ſound betwéene griefe and ioy, was carried away halfe dead to his lodging, where he had not lyen two howres, but in an extaſie he ended his life. The Duke of Pillaine diſcouered himſelfe, who, by the Duke of Palermo was highly intertayned.

But Philomela hearing of the death of her husband, fell into extreame paſſions, and although Arnoldo Strozzo deſired her in marriage: yet ſhee returned home to Venice, and there liued the deſolate widdow of Philippo Medici all her life: which conſtant chaſtity

made her so famous, that in her life shee was honoured as the Paragon of vertue, and after her death solemnely, and with wonderfull honour intombed in Saint Marks Church, and her fame holden canonized vntill this day in Venice.

FINIS.